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Volunteers support Micronesia community in Hawaii with first ever summer basketball tournament

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

July 4, 2021
Oahu, Hawaii—On June 24-26, Micronesian young people in Hawaii competed in what organizers billed as the “Jungle Basketball Summer Tournament”. The tournament was an 18 and under competition organized by individuals from the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia.



A four minute, professionally

edited video on YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKJ26NfeOFI) shows a highly organized, energetic, exciting and safe event. A professional Master of Ceremonies also volunteered his time for the event. The basketball players in the video showed a high degree of skill with many, net-only field goals shot even though the teams were put together by the

coaches in only about a month.

“In the aftermath of the shooting incident that killed one of our young Micronesian boys, there have been increased efforts by community members, non-profit and government, to tackle challenges

experienced by our younger generations,” said Shanty Asher, who is a member of the Board of Education where she serves as Pacific Islands Liaison. Asher was quick to say that she did not conceive of the idea of

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FSM Supreme Court upholds arbitration ruling to award damages to Pacific International of over \$9 million

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

July 5, 2021

FSM—On July 2, 2021 FSM Supreme Court Associate Justice Beaulen Carl-Worswick has ruled that the FSM Government must pay damages to contractor Pacific International Inc. (PII) of Majuro, RMI of \$8.5 million plus interest amounts. The damages were awarded after the FSM cancelled its contract with PII to construct the road in Weno, Chuuk.

The Court ruled:

1. The FSM must pay PII \$8,515,466.

2. Interest of \$984,988.00 on that portion of the award for costs prior to contract termination (accruing from the date of submission to FSM of PII’s certified claim through the date of the award).

3. Interest on the award of \$8,515,466.00, accrued at the rate provided in Section 1.28(g) of the Contract, from the date of the award until the date this Court enters Judgment on its Order.

4. The total judgment shall accrue statutory interest at 9% per year, as set forth in 6 F.S.M.C. 1401.

5. The administrative fees and expenses of the ICDR of \$59,088.50 shall be borne as incurred by the parties, and the compensation and expenses of the arbitrators of \$493,548.45 shall be borne equally by the parties. Each party shall bear its own attorneys’ fees and costs/expenses.

On March 4, 2015, at the request of FSM and PII, the court issued an order staying the litigation on the matter so that the parties could voluntarily participate in

See “PII Ruling” on page 6

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FSM combatting Human Trafficking but more to be done according to US Trafficking report

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

July 4, 2021

FSM—Throughout the world, criminals make billions of dollars by subjecting millions of people to modern slavery. Whether through forced labor or sexual servitude, criminals intentionally strip away victims’ human rights and any control of their destinies. The International Labor Organization estimates that there are 40.3 million victims of human trafficking globally.

Each year the United States State Department releases its Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report, which rates efforts made by individual countries, if any, to combat the crime of human tragedy. Last week it released the TIP report covering 2020 activities. The report uses a Tier rating system. If the State Department ranks a country’s efforts as Tier 1, it does not indicate that there is no human trafficking in that country, only that the country’s efforts are significant to combat the crime and to free victims from bondage. 30 countries’ efforts were

rated at Tier 1 on the current report. 17 countries were given the lowest rating of Tier 3.

For the eighth year in a row, the US rated the Federated States of Micronesia’s efforts as at the Tier 2 level, meaning that the FSM does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so. “The government demonstrated overall increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period,” the report said.

Of the three Freely Associated States of Micronesia, the FSM’s human trafficking effort rating has been the most stable throughout the previous eight years, though it has been continually trying to ramp up its efforts.

In the last eight years, the Republic of the Marshall Islands has been on Tier 3, the lowest rating on the scale for two of them. In 2018 the US rated RMI’s efforts at Tier 2. During five of the years including in the last report, the country has rated Tier 2 Watchlist. The report said that RMI has

not convicted any traffickers since 2011. “Because the government has devoted sufficient resources to a written plan that, if implemented, would constitute significant efforts to meet the minimum standards, Marshall Islands was granted a waiver per the Trafficking Victims Protection Act from an otherwise required downgrade to Tier 3. Therefore, Marshall Islands remained on Tier 2 Watch List for the third consecutive year,” the report said of RMI.

Palau’s efforts ranking was downgraded to Tier 2 Watchlist after seven years at Tier 2.

“As reported over the past five years, human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in the FSM, and traffickers exploit victims from FSM abroad,” the report said in summarizing the human trafficking environment in the FSM. “Sex traffickers exploit Micronesian women and girls through commercial sex with the crewmembers of docked Asian fishing vessels, crewmembers on vessels in FSM territorial waters, or with foreign construction workers. Some family members exploit Micronesian girls in sex trafficking. There are reports of children exploited in commercial sex facilitated by taxi drivers. Local authorities claim many sex trafficking cases are unreported due to social stigma and victims’ fear of possible repercussions in their home communities. LGBTQI+ individuals are disproportionately vulnerable to trafficking. Foreign and domestic employers in FSM exploit low-skilled foreign migrant workers in forced labor, including in restaurants. Foreign migrants from Southeast Asian countries report working in conditions indicative

of human trafficking on Asian fishing vessels in FSM or its territorial waters. Traffickers recruit FSM women and men with promises of well-paying jobs in the United States and its territories but upon their arrival they are subsequently forced into commercial sex, domestic servitude, or forced labor.”

The narrative on FSM’s Anti-Human Trafficking listed prioritized recommendations for action:

- Increase efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers, and sentence convicted traffickers to significant prison terms.
- Finalize, disseminate, and train officials on procedures for the proactive identification and referral of trafficking victims to rehabilitation services.
- Increase resources for protection services for trafficking victims.
- Screen for trafficking indicators among vulnerable groups, including individuals in commercial sex.
- Increase and institutionalize anti-trafficking training for police, prosecutors, and judges, including on how to implement a victim-centered approach.
- Provide legal alternatives to the removal of foreign trafficking victims to countries where they may face hardship or retribution.
- Strengthen efforts to implement the national action plan (NAP) and state-level plans, including through staffing a governmental anti-trafficking secretariat.

See “TIP Report” on page 11



The Kaselehlie Press

Your Newspaper for Today and Tomorrow

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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

**THE NEXT ISSUE OF
THE KASELEHLIE PRESS
WILL BE RELEASED ON:
July 21, 2021**

**Deadline for submission of articles or
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US Embassy to the FSM hosts reception commemorating 245 years of US independence

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

July 5, 2021
Pohnpei—On July 2, 2021, the US Embassy to the FSM hosted a reception at Hideaway Grill to commemorate 245 years since the date of the signing of the Declaration of Dependence on July 4, 1776. Unlike many previous Embassy celebrations of this event, this year’s event was for invited government and NGO officials.

“Independence Day is a special time for friends, families, and communities to gather to celebrate our Nation’s Independence,” said U.S. Charge d’Affaires Kristin Westphal during her speech. “We wanted this important day to have a theme that reflects community and togetherness, values important to people of the FSM and the United States alike. This year’s theme is taken from the World Health Organization’s Immunization Week 2021 campaign, “Vaccines Bring Us Closer.””

“I hope that 2021 continues to be the year the world begins to regain its normal rhythms, in large part due to the very effective



and safe vaccines provided by the United States and its partners.”

Westphal also announced that Shawn Edwin was the grand prize winner of the Embassy’s Virtual Art Competition, which had the theme “The Importance of the COVID-19 Vaccination”. Nora Amor was the runner up in that competition.

“In June 2020, the United States and the FSM began talks on renewing certain expiring provisions of the Compact of Free Association,” she said. “In a recent statement, Ambassador Karen Stewart, the U.S. Senior Adviser and Co-Lead Negotiator for the Compact of Free Association, talked about the FSM-

U.S. relationship and said: “We have a unique, historic, and special relationship with the Federated States of Micronesia as one of the Freely Associated States. Our strong bonds and deep friendships are underpinned by the Compact of Free Association and its related agreements.””

FSM Deputy Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Ricky F. Cantero represented President David Panuelo at the reception. “Today, the President wishes to confirm to all citizens across the Nation of his Administration’s tireless efforts to conclude a third Compact for post

See “Independence Day” on page 11

IOM handovers of Dignity Kits to Chuuk, Yap, and Kosrae

International Organization for Migration

FSM – Over the past month, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in collaboration with the Australian Embassy, provided 325 Dignity Kits to health agencies across the FSM. IOM handed over 200 Dignity Kits to Dr. Dorina Fred, Chief of Public Health in Chuuk on June 7; 75 Dignity Kits to Dr. Aileen Tareg, Director of the Department of Health and Services in Yap on June 15; and 50 Dignity Kits to Mr. Bob Skilling,

Director of the Department of Health and Services in Kosrae on June 25. These handovers mark the completion of the creation and provision of the Dignity Kits throughout FSM as part of a COVID-19 response project, “Strengthening Health Dispensaries in the FSM.” The first handover took place in Pohnpei on May 21.

The creation of these kits is unique, because it economically empowers women’s groups in each state by

supporting their business enterprises, in addition to providing hygiene and sanitary items to help women maintain their dignity during humanitarian crises. The Chuuk Women’s Council (CWC) was instrumental in the production of the kits in Chuuk, Yap Women Association produced the local face masks, and Pohnpei’s Lihn Mwokiloo produced both local oils and face masks.

Inside the Dignity Kits are standard hygiene items such as shampoo,

toothbrush, toothpaste, menstrual pads, Tylenol, bandage, local oil, bath soap, comb, nail clipper, toilet paper, mosquito repellent/coil, hand sanitizer, face masks (disposable and cloth), baby wipes, rubbing alcohol, bath towel, laundry powder and contraceptives. These items ensure that women in quarantine due to COVID-19 pandemic and women who are survivors of domestic violence or intimate partner violence and are removed from unsafe environments are equipped with the necessities to care for their needs.



FSM citizens awarded prestigious graduate scholarships to Sophia University

Association for the Promotion of International Cooperation (APIC)

TOKYO, JAPAN – Two citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) have been awarded full-ride scholarships to pursue Master’s Degrees in Global Environmental Studies from Sophia University in Tokyo, Japan. The competitive scholarships are offered by a partnership comprised of The Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT), Sophia University, the Association for the Promotion of International Cooperation (APIC), a private foundation based in Tokyo, and partners of the Micronesia Challenge. This is the fourth year that the two graduate school scholarships, which cover all expenses, are offered to citizens of the FSM, Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau.

The 2021 recipients of the APIC-Sophia University-MCT Scholarships are Ms. Natasha M. Gorong of Yap, FSM, and Ms. Tara Shaniah Arnold of Chuuk, FSM. Since it was first offered in 2017, seven Micronesia region citizens have been awarded the coveted scholarship. Of that group, four have received an M.A. in Global Environmental Studies and now hold leading positions in their home countries.

Both scholars in May this year received their undergraduate degrees. Ms. Gorong, who majored in Environmental Studies and minored in Political Science, received her bachelor’s degree from Le Moyne College in May 2021. Ms. Arnold received her bachelor’s degree in Criminal Justice at Wheeling University, in West Virginia.

APIC, Sophia University and MCT partner to select current conservation professionals from Micronesia to pursue graduate level degrees in conservation. Sophia University has committed to providing full tuition scholarships, APIC covers travel, room and board and monthly allowance, and MCT, through the Bill Raynor Micronesia Challenge Scholarship Fund, covers the cost of internships for the scholars.

The Scholarship Fund aims to produce professionals who contribute to the development of effective conservation of Micronesia’s biodiversity and the promotion of sustainable livelihoods across the region. The scholars focus on developing leadership and technical skills

and/or majors that enhance their ability to carry out work in conservation, climate adaptation and sustainable development in Micronesia.

Awardees of this prestigious scholarship will receive financial support to earn graduate degrees while receiving close guidance and mentorship from key individuals within the Micronesia Challenge partnership. The mentors/advisors are technical experts who have extensive experience in the field of conservation, climate change adaptation and sustainable development in Micronesia and the broader Pacific. Scholars are paired with host institutions at their permanent residences in the FSM, Palau and the Marshall Islands where they are required to carry out research work to support conservation, climate adaptation and sustainable development initiatives supported by MCT, and its Micronesia Challenge partners. The program has retained 100 percent of its graduates within Micronesia.



Natasha Gorong



Tara Arnold

Embassy hosts vaccine drive

U.S. Embassy Kolonia

In the runup to Independence Day, (theme: Vaccines Bring Us Closer, adopted from WHO’s Immunization Week 2021 campaign) U.S. Embassy Kolonia partnered with Pohnpei State Public Health and held a COVID-19 vaccination drive outside the Embassy June 30 from 9am to noon. A total of 30 FSM residents received vaccinations. A life-sized foamboard cutout of Dr. Anthony Fauci was a popular photo op for those being vaccinated. Pohnpei State Governor Reed Oliver visited at the end of the event, expressing his appreciation to the Embassy for providing an additional venue for

COVID-19 vaccinations. The Embassy greatly appreciates the work of the Pohnpei State Public Health team and the support of local, state, and national governments for this vaccination drive.



Embassy kicks off 245th Fourth of July celebration

U.S. Embassy Kolonia

July 2, 2021

On Friday, June 25, Chargé d’Affaires Kristin Westphal U.S. Embassy Kolonia in kicking off the 245th Independence Day celebration with the lighting of red, white, and blue LED Embassy perimeter lights. Prior to the lighting event, Chargé

d’Affaires Westphal and Pohnpei’s First Lady Estle Oliver pinned new members of the Pohnpei Girl Scouts Organization, who then recited their first Girl Scouts Pledge. After the pinning ceremony, the troops performed a traditional Pohnpeian dance "dokia" in front of Embassy staff and their parents. The lights will be up until Tuesday, July 6.



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Request for Quotation (RFQ)

Project Title: Awareness, Training and Visibility Services – MICCO19 (FSM)

A. Project Description

The Pacific Community (SPC) responds to food insecurity conditions in the Pacific African Caribbean and Pacific countries emerging from the COVID-19 crisis, through the European Union-funded Phase II Micronesia COVID-19 Response (MICCO19) initiative. USAID is co-financing additional funds linked to good governance to work delivered under MICCO19 as part of the North Pacific Food Security Governance Project (NPFSGP). The specific objective of MICCO19 and the NPFSGP is to address food & nutrition security impacts because of COVID-19 through strengthened sustainable and resilient food systems and good governance. This will be implemented in the following countries in the North Pacific: Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Palau, and Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI).

SPC has currently contracted the firm, Palikir Consulting Services (PCS), to undertake the FSM MICCO19 activities, with a view to coordinate these activities with National and State agriculture priorities in order to support overall implementation synergies and procurement efficiencies within a very limited timeframe for the project execution, which is from June to December 2021.

Palikir Consulting Services (PCS) is currently seeking an individual or organization that can provide the following services:

- High level of professionally developed and produced awareness, training and visibility materials associated with the implementation of the MICCO19 project. These include videos, brochures and other visibility materials to help promote the effectiveness and sustainability of MICCO19 and its implementation in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

B. Scope of Work and Expected Outputs

Under the supervision of the PCS Core Team, the Consultant will specifically provide the following:

1. Ability to consistently collaborate, meet with, and communicate with the Core Team and the National Technical Expert (NTE), and provide the audio and visual equipment and expertise in Pohnpei and potentially the other FSM States needed to undertake documentation of the project as directed.
2. Develop a final MICCO19 Training of Trainer video, including

development of scripts and redrafts of the video, set up and coordinate interviews with key stakeholders for the video, provide both in-studio and on-site filming, provide professional editing services, including titling, subtitling, graphics and transitions, and other related work including potential for translation of the video into the four major languages of FSM.

3. Develop and produce a Community Leaflet (single page, front and back) that will be provided to communities and households in FSM on how to store, plant, grow and transplant vegetables, conduct composting activities and organic pest management. This will include being able to review and revise an outline, narratives, provide high quality photos and graphic layout services, be clear and easy to understand, be translated into the four major FSM languages, be visually pleasing and incorporate logos and branding as approved by PCS and SPC.

4. Work with vendors and stakeholders to provide additional giveaway materials to develop other visibility material (banners, posters, t-shirts, etc.) needed for promotion of the MICCO 19 project and its activities. This will include the need for sourcing and budgeting for printing of the aforementioned materials.

C. Budget

The maximum budget for this consultancy is \$24,000. Quotations should address and provide a brief detail on the ability to undertake the services, outline of the proposed actions and the anticipated costs for each of the four areas of work provided under the Scope of Work and Expected Outputs in this RFQ (part B above). Creativity and innovation in the approach to the outputs will be welcomed.

D. Selection of Preferred Proponents

Individuals and/or organizations will be selected on the following criteria:

1. Financial proposal (50%)
2. Ability to provide required audio-visual capabilities (25%)
3. Proposed methodology (25%)

E. Responses to this RFQ

All submissions, responses and follow-up queries to this request for quotations should be transmitted to Palikir Consulting Services at palikirconsultants@gmail.com, and addressed to the, 'MICCO19 Project Team'. Please use the following as your email Subject heading : 'Awareness, Training and Visibility Services – MICCO19 (FSM)'.

All final submissions should be received by PCS no later than 5 :00pm, July 14, 2021, Pohnpei, FSM time.

...PII Ruling

Continued from front page

mediation. The court ruled that because the FSM had opportunity to request a trial before arbitration began but failed to do so. It didn't request a trial on the matter of enforcement of the arbitration agreement until May 1, 2020, after arbitration was completed.

It cited U.S. Case law precedents that say that a commercial entity that objects to the arbitrability of a dispute, but does not seek reasonable judicial remedies and instead, participates in the arbitration, waives its argument on appeal that the dispute was not arbitrable as the FSM had argued.

"The court finds that the FSM should be bound by the arbitrators' decision, as it fully participated in the arbitration process. (The FSM demanded that three arbitrators rather than one decide the dispute, driving up costs)," the ruling says. "Also, in 2019, FSM President Peter M. Christian signed FSM Public Law No. 20-172, which appropriated \$500,000 to fund the arbitration costs." A footnote of the ruling says that the total compensation and expenses of the arbitrators totaled \$493,548.45.

"The court finds that the FSM was

provided due process in the arbitration proceedings. Three arbitrators with commercial litigation experience determined this matter after ten (10) days of hearings, including expert testimony. 14 The arbitrators' Final Award consists of seventy-two (72) pages of discussion, analysis and conclusions. The FSM has not questioned the validity of the arbitrators' conclusions, only the amount of damages to be entered by the court. 15 The court finds no independent basis to decline entry of the Final Award as an Order and Judgment of the court."

In its conclusion, the ruling says that the FSM has not vigorously and consistently objected to the court's jurisdiction to order this matter to arbitration, or to the jurisdiction of the AAA/ICDR to adjudicate and enter a decision. The FSM should not now be permitted to benefit from any failure on its part to raise procedural issues that would not seem to substantively impact the outcome of the case. Under these circumstances, the court finds that the FSM has been accorded due process of law, and judicial economy militates in favor of entry of the arbitration award as an Order and Judgment of the court and the denial of trial de novo."

Trial de novo is a trial in a higher court in which all the issues of fact or law tried in a lower court or tribunal are reconsidered as if no previous trial had taken place.

Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation shows stronger financial position

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

July 5, 2021

Pohnpei—The financial condition of the Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation was slightly better in fiscal year 2020 over that of 2019 according to a recently released audit conducted by the Pohnpei Office of the Public Auditor.

Auditors says that the Corporation earned a total of \$68,456 in revenues during 2020, a 24 percent increase over revenues of 2019. Expenses were up by 18% to \$185,248 in 2020 compared to \$156,396 in 2019. The Corporation's net assets increased by \$40,358. It said that the Corporation's loan accounts increased from a net of \$572,086 in fiscal year 2019 to a total net of \$1,120,650 in 2020. Auditors said that one contributing factor is that several accounts were paid off but new loans were approved due to a Consumer Loan

Program.

Auditors made note of five deficiencies that require correction. Thomas Pablo, Executive Director of the Corporation pointed out that midway through the process of migrating from an old accounting software package to a new one, the COVID-19 pandemic closed the borders. Meanwhile, the old system completely crashed and the ability to do training on the new system was cut short. They are continuing to work with the software provider for further enhancement of the system's security functions and training of the staff on its use.

He also said that the Corporation has made it a priority to find and hire a qualified Senior Accountant, and that process is nearly complete. He indicates that when that process is completed, most of the errors that auditors found will be resolved.

GGF comes through again for Micronesia CSOs!

Micronesia Conservation Trust

In May 2021, the Global Greengrants Fund (GGF) approved community development and climate resilient grants to seven (7) Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) across Micronesia. Those organizations include the Toamoaroahlong Community Organization of Pohnpei FSM, Rohi Youth Organization of Pohnpei FSM, Riken Community Trust Fund of Yap FSM, Ngermid Youth Organization of Palau, Kora in Okrane in the Marshall Islands, Society for Historic Investigation and Preservation of Chuuk FSM and the Woapun Koapin Soamwoai organization of Pohnpei FSM. Each organization received a grant of around \$5,000 with a total amount of approximately \$35,000 to the Micronesia sub-region. William Kostka, who serves as Micronesia's representative on the GGF Pacific Advisory Board, worked with each of the organizations to develop and submit their grants. For the past 15 years GGF has provided Micronesian community organizations with over 100 grants totaling over half a million dollars.

The Toamoaroahlong Community Organization (TCO) will use their grant to implement a Ridge to Reef Community Empowerment and Climate Resilience

Project to improve management of their traditional agroforestry systems, water resources, mangroves, sea-grass beds, and coral reefs. They also plan to implement climate smart agriculture practices, including the introduction of climate resilient crop species, removal of invasive species and protection of mangroves. They will also continue community cleanup activities to rid pests and other pollutants from their village. The Rohi Youth Organization (RYO) will help families/ persons living with disabilities improve their water security by providing water tanks to few households with no means to purchase their own water tanks. They will also place the water tanks in strategic areas around the village where residents have little to no access to water due to their location. The Riken Community Trust Fund will further develop the village marine protected area (MPA) through expansion and demarcation of the MPA with the acquisition of necessary materials including, floatation devices, anchorage and beacons to allow for more visibility of their MPA. The Ngermid Youth Organization (NYO) will implement a food security project by conducting aquaculture activities. This will include the purchasing of giant clam seedlings, installing marker buoys for clam restocking area and establishment of a storage facility to store



equipment for their program. The Kora in Okrane group in the Marshall Islands will improve water security and health by providing 500 filtration systems to households, schools and the hospital dispensary on Jaluit Atoll with a population of 1788. The Society for Historic Investigation and Preservation of Chuuk will rehabilitate the Witipwon Watershed, located in the village of Penia, on the island of Weno, Chuuk State. Their activities will include the removal of invasive species and replanting and restoration of the native vegetation. And the Woapun Koapin Soamwoai group will use their GGF grant to support ecosystem-based adaptation activities in their villages/kousapw. These will include improved watershed and protected areas management.

The next round of GGF grants will be in September. Please contact William Kostka at director@ourmicronesia.org if you are interested in a GGF grant for your community.



IN CELEBRATION OF **WORLD TUNA DAY** MAY 02, 2021
 FSM GOVERNMENT THROUGH NORMA IS ACCEPTING ENTRIES FROM FSM CITIZENS AND RESIDENTS FOR ANY OF THE THREE CONTESTS BELOW:



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- CATEGORY 3: AGES 14 & ABOVE

ESSAY CONTEST CATEGORIES:

- CATEGORY 1: AGES 14-17
- CATEGORY 2: AGES 18-21

MUSIC AUDIO/VIDEO CATEGORIES:

ALL AGES CAN ENTER

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 - 2ND PRIZE: \$100.00
 - 3RD PRIZE: \$75.00
 - 4TH PRIZE: \$50.00
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 - 4TH PRIZE: \$75.00
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Expo 2010 Shanghai China

The military parade to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China



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Beijing 2022 The XXIV Olympic Winter Games



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The ACP-EU Programme (Pacific) *Enhancing capacity for the sustainability of the cultural and creative industries Grant Scheme* aims to increase the contribution of the cultural and creative sectors economic revenue, commercial engagement, and its recognition in national economies. The specific objective is to increase capacity and sustainability of cultural and creative industry initiatives through this Grant Scheme.

Who can apply?

Creatives, Artists, Cultural Producers, Local Businesses, national culture and art agencies and institutions from the ACP Pacific region. Countries include Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

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The ACP-EU programme (Pacific) is implemented by the Pacific Community in partnership with the Queensland University of Technology.

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...Hawaii basketball

Continued from front page

the tournament but merely helped locals to organize the myriad of details required to have a successful event, particularly during the global pandemic. "It was a hope of the organizers that the event would not only bring these kids to compete and build various leadership efforts and realize their potentials but also to have them in one venue to share education and encouraging messages as they are starting their summer."

Though there was interest from many more people, tournament organizers had to limit the number of teams to eight due to the capacity of the Kaimuki High School gymnasium where the event was held and because of COVID-19 mitigation restrictions. The eight teams, four from Chuuk, one from RMI, one from Pohnpei, one from Kosrae, and a combination team of players from both RMI and Chuuk battled hard, but ultimately there could only be one tournament champ. Team "Bang Bang" from Kosrae, coached by David Taulung and team "Chuuk State", coached by Greg Fritz faced off against each other in the finals with Team "Bang Bang" from Kosrae walking away with the tournament title.

"I feel like coaching was always a passion of mine. The sport of basketball, I played most of my life, since I was eight years old. It saved my life." wrote Bang Bang coach David Taulung. "Growing up in Hawaii wasn't the easiest, to be honest. Parents are too busy trying to put food on the table and making ends meet. But my father surrounded me with great mentors/coaches at a young age, so I saw the effect it had on myself and others. I feel it would be super selfish not to share it...I feel like it's time! Time to give back! Micronesians youth in Hawaii need us 100 %, and I feel like I can use this coaching opportunity to save

someone else. Give them our time, show them we care and how their decision making plays a big role in our lives and our future. This is more than just coaching basketball. This is us helping each other become better people in life."

Other teams were "Uflyers" from Chuuk coached by Jones Kikku; "Lil Pwipwis" from Chuuk coached by Travis Gouland; "Yokwe" from the Marshall Islands coached by Derek Samuel; "Mix Plate" from Chuuk coached by Bradley Phillip; "TGFB", the combined team from RMI and Chuuk coached by Alkinda Phillip; and "Keido Keren" from Pohnpei coached by Kobe Edgar, Hainrick Panuelo, and Calvin Apis.

Asher said that Jaime Dela Cruz, Kaimuki High School Principal and Gym Director Fred Lee and staff members were extremely supportive of the event from the moment the idea was presented to them. A large number of Micronesians attend Kaimuki High School. The school and the Board of Education did not charge organizers for the use of the gym, though they did require COVID-19 mitigation plans and facilities usage agreements.

Kaimuki High School Basketball Coach also enthusiastically attended the event. Certainly not all of the participants in the tournament attend the High School but the coach strongly encouraged Kaimuki athletes participating in the event to try out for the school basketball team.

Asher says that interest is already high for another, potentially bigger tournament at the beginning of next summer. Micronesians on Hawaii's other islands hope that they can participate next year if it is safe to do so.

"You are Micronesian, and you being here has made today a wonderful day, just by you being you," said President David Panuelo during a Zoom speech held at the beginning of the tournament. "While you are always welcome in your home islands, which will be forever yours, you should know that Hawaii is your home too, and because you are there right now, at this moment, it is forever yours as well. You are not an alien or an outsider in Hawaii, but a member of the community. You are not an alien or outsider in America, but a resident of the country. I encourage you to remember that, because while we will always feel our attention pulled to incidents of discrimination and hardship, we must make an effort to recognize that the overwhelming majority of people are good. Extend to all people that you meet, whether they were born in Yap, born in Hawaii, or born in New York, with peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity, and expect the same in return. When you look in the mirror, be proud of who you are, and know that I am proud of you, too. I wish you all the best in your basketball



tournament. Have fun, and God Bless."

Asher said that community really stepped up to support the athletes and the Micronesia community. She said that special thanks go to the volunteer referees, the volunteer coaches, event volunteers and all of the many sponsors. She said that sponsors were Kaimuki High School, Principal Jaime Dela Cruz and Gym Director Fred Lee and staff members; City & County of Honolulu, Office of Economic Revitalization; Kuldip Productions Inc; Soused Production; Micronesian Health Advisory Coalition (MHAC); Marshallese Consulate Office; Marshallese Organization of Hawaii (MCOH); Jayex Garage; Pacific Islander Contact Tracers; Hawaii State Department of Health; and Team Faichuuk.

Rotary Club of Pohnpei donates sports equipment

The Rotary Club of Pohnpei is dedicated to improving health and fitness of our youth. One of our big projects this year is donating sporting goods and equipment to local schools and organizations. Rotary Club of Pohnpei in conjunction with the Micronesia & Palau Supporting Consortium by Rotary Clubs in Tokyo

which consists of the following clubs, Tokyo Chuo RC, Tokyo Akasaka RC, Tokyo Seijyo-Shin RC, Tokyo Ginza RC, Tokyo Musashi-Fuchu RC, Tokyo Tsukiji RC, Tokyo Chuo-Shin RC, Tokyo Ebisu RC, Tokyo Sunrise-Shiodome RC, and Tokyo Shinagawa RC, paid for approximately \$11,500.00 in sporting

goods for donations. The first items have now arrived. We received 16 backboards and rims and have been distributing them now. We gave 8 backboards and rims to the Department of Education for four schools who needed them, and gave two backboards and rims to the Mwoakillese community.

DOE receiving his donation and Soulik En Eir, Mr. Max Lebehn, receiving the donation on behalf of the Mwoakillese Community.

We are currently waiting for balls, volleyball nets, jump ropes and other items to go to all the schools in Pohnpei. We also painted some physical education tracks on the road near the airport, and at the Spanish Wall park. Go and enjoy.

Good health builds good citizens, so we are happy that we can make this contribution.



...Independence Day

Continued from page 3

2023,” Cantero said. “He wishes to give assurance to all citizens that there will be a Compact III, and that the people of our country remain very grateful for the continued support of the United States and its people.”

The use of the title Compact III is somewhat misleading because the Compact of Free Association between the US and the FSM is a treaty in perpetuity that has been amended once. That amended Compact has often been referred to as Compact II for convenience. The term Compact III was also similarly coined.

Cantero also conveyed the President’s announcement that the FSM has recently



endorsed a vaccination campaign proposal requesting assistance of U.S. medical professionals to assist the FSM to increase its vaccination rate to the minimum threshold of 70 percent. “Having recently received support and approval of the proposal, it is hoped that this campaign will help the country transition from its current status of COVID-19 free to a new status of COVID-19 protected. Sincerest gratitude is hereby extended to our friend, the gracious people of the United States

of America,” he said. “Additionally, in the President’s view, it is not a coincidence that the Biden Administration has targeted July 4th as a day to achieve certain levels of vaccination in the United States,” Cantero said. “Whether the target is achievable is beside the point. Rather, the significance of that target to coincide with the US Independence Day lies in the subtle message

to all nations that the United States is back, and is reclaiming its leading role on global matters such as the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. It’s a bold statement of re-affirmation of the good old American glory; that, in the face of this raging pandemic, it’s the American strength and spirit that will always prevail. It’s a strong testament of re-assurance to all its citizens that the United States will always be the beacon

of hope and that the United States will always endure.”

The official segment of the program concluded; participants then took advantage of the heaps of hamburgers and other food while the band “Wetter Than Seattle” performed.

...TIP Report

Continued from page 2

- Monitor foreign labor recruitment for trafficking indicators, including the coercive use of debt.
- Strengthen efforts to conduct anti-trafficking awareness campaigns targeted to traditional leaders, health care professionals, and the public, including those citizens of FSM who might migrate for work overseas.

“The government did not report any new trafficking investigations, compared with one in 2019, and prosecuted four alleged traffickers, compared with eight in 2019. Courts convicted four traffickers during the reporting period, compared with six in 2019. Courts sentenced one trafficker to three months’ imprisonment and a \$100 fine, one to 12 months’ imprisonment and a \$250 fine, one to seven years’ imprisonment and seven years’ probation, and one to 10 years’ imprisonment (served only on the weekends during the 10 years) and a \$5,000 fine. Lenient sentences of a year or less or those that were not served on consecutive days created potential safety problems for trafficking victims and weakened deterrence. The government continued to prosecute a child sex trafficking case involving one child victim and three alleged traffickers during the reporting period. In the previous reporting period, the acting attorney general of Yap was murdered, and some media reports stated the motive, which remained unclear, may have been related to her prosecution work, including on human trafficking. The government charged two perpetrators with 19 counts ranging from murder and manslaughter to firearms possession; the trial was ongoing at the end of the reporting period. Law enforcement officials cooperated with a foreign government on an ongoing international trafficking case,” the TIP Report said.

It characterized the FSM government’s effort for protection of victims of Human Trafficking as “mixed” particularly concerning efforts to proactively identify trafficking victims.

The 638 page report can be viewed online at www.state.gov/reports/2021-trafficking-in-persons-report/

Case, Kahele urge Biden to appoint envoy to Micronesia

The Hawaii representatives say it’s necessary in order to renew the Compacts of Free Association.

By Chad Blair
Honolulu Civil Beat

In a letter Tuesday to President Joe Biden, Hawaii’s two congressional representatives asked the administration to prioritize negotiations with the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau.

That includes the appointment of a special envoy or senior appointee to coordinate federal renewal of Compacts of Free Association — formal agreements between the U.S. and each nation — and to work with Congress on the “substance of these negotiations to ensure swift approval of the agreements.”

The agreements between the U.S. and the Micronesian countries are critical, say Democratic Reps. Ed Case and Kai Kahele, because of a long-shared history “and critical presents and futures.”

The compacts, subsidiary agreements and enacting legislation define a “decades-old special and mutually beneficial relationship,” they write, and provide the U.S. with valuable economic and security benefits, including:

- The right to mutual control over an expanse of the Pacific as large as the 48 continental States — from

- Hawaii to Guam, the Philippines, and Indonesia – including shipping lanes coveted by competitors;
- basing rights, including facilities on Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have termed “the world’s premiere range and test site for intercontinental ballistic missiles and space operations support” and the installation of new advance warning U.S. military radar systems in Palau; and
- a say over the interactions of the COFA nations — also known as the Freely Associated States — with other governments and over FAS policies the U.S. “deems inconsistent with common defense requirements.”

Under the Trump administration, COFA renewal talks were reported to be on track to finish in 2020. But then came the new administration as well as the global pandemic.

“Although the previous administration hoped to complete the negotiations by the end of 2020, little progress was made,” Case and Kahele say in their letter, which was also signed by 13 other bipartisan members of Congress.

There is a sense of urgency to the task, as trust funds intended to replace annual financial grants from the U.S. to the

COFA nations after fiscal year 2023 for the RMI and the FSM and 2024 for Palau are deemed insufficient.

As well, the commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command warned Congress in 2019 of “the pernicious use of Beijing’s economic leverage” in the region.

Meanwhile, it’s estimated that over 94,000 COFA citizens live in the United States and its territories as part of the compacts, “contributing to our economies and the diversity of our communities.” The negotiations between the U.S. and the COFA nations must include supporting the economic and social needs of the citizens of the region, the congressmen said.

The letter to Biden is copied to the departments of Defense, Interior and State as well as to the national security advisor.

In a related development, in December Congress restored Medicaid access for COFA citizens in the U.S. nearly 25 years after taking it away.

And in May Sen. Mazie Hirono of Hawaii introduced a bill in Congress that would allow COFA citizens in the U.S. to receive food stamps and other federal benefits that had been denied the migrant communities for decades.

U.S. Army Pacific schedules annual exercise in Guam and Republic of Palau

Joint Region Marianas Public Affairs

July 2, 2021

ASAN, Guam – The U.S. Army Pacific will host an annual expeditionary training event later this month in Guam and the Republic of Palau.

The training exercise will consist of a command post exercise, air and sea deployments of military equipment, beach landings, live-fire exercises, and airborne operations to further enhance readiness and demonstrate the military's full commitment to the security and stability of this region. Residents are advised they may see or hear increased ground and road activity over the next month, as a result of the exercise.

Exercise participants in Guam will reside at U.S. Naval Base Guam facilities and in a tent camp on Andersen Air Force Base (AFB) for the duration of the training when not involved in exercise-related operations outside of the installations. All COVID-19 mitigations will be strictly enforced in accordance with military and government of Guam public health pandemic policies.

Base patrons both on NBG and Andersen AFB should expect increased utilization of facilities to include base exchanges, commissaries, and Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR). Additionally, motorists are reminded to practice caution due to an increase in pedestrians on the bases.

The U.S. Army, U.S. Army Pacific, and America's First Corps are fully committed to conducting realistic training to ensure troops are ready and prepared to execute multi-domain operations to support a free and open Indo-Pacific.



SOLICITATION NUMBER: 72049221R10007
ISSUANCE DATE: June 24, 2021
CLOSING DATE/TIME: July 23, 2021
 11:59PM Philippine time



SUBJECT: Solicitation for USAID Project Management Specialist (Resilience), FSN-11

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking offers from qualified CCN (Cooperating Country Nationals) to provide personal services as described on the USAID website: <https://www.usaid.gov/pacific-islands/careers>.

The USAID Project Management Specialist (Resilience) serves as the primary staff for the USAID/Pacific Island sub-office in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) which covers primarily the FSM, but at times may provide support to the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and Palau. The Specialist performs a variety of research, analyses, reporting, coordination, monitoring, outreach, and administrative functions in support of USAID's Pacific Islands Main Office located in Manila, Philippines. The Specialist supports and closely advises the USAID Country Coordinator in FSM as well as the General Development Officer (GDO) and USAID/Philippines technical and support offices to help achieve the following objectives in the Pacific: to support the U.S. Government's (USG) broader foreign policy objectives in the region; to address regional and country priorities; to complement other donor efforts; and to report on the latest news, developments, and perspective from the field and advise on how the portfolio can be adjusted accordingly.

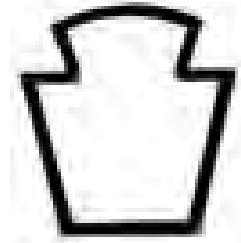
To be considered for this position candidates must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Education (10 points): Bachelor's Degree with a focus on subjects such as environmental engineering, environmental management, water and sanitation management, economics, and international development and governance or a similar related degree is required. Note: Additional education may NOT be substituted for experience.
2. Prior Work Experience (30 points): Minimum of five years of progressively responsible, professional-level experience in the development field is required. Three years of this should have been in development assistance or related work with the USG, FSM government organizations, other donor agencies, or the private sector. Experience should include project design, program planning and implementation, performance monitoring, and/or the analysis and interpretation of large amounts of complex sector/program/project/activity information. Note: Additional experience may NOT be substituted for education.
3. Language Proficiency/Communication Skills (20 points): Must have excellent communication skills in English, both in oral and written forms, in order to communicate effectively with USAID Mission staff and external contacts at various levels. Writing skills are required to prepare regular and ad hoc reports, project documentation, and briefing papers.
4. Job Knowledge (20 points): The Specialist must have a demonstrated knowledge of priority sectors that are important to economic growth and demonstrated expertise in designing activities that effectively applies science and technology for informed planning and decision-making. Knowledge and understanding of the economic, political, social, and cultural characteristics of all of the above countries; and, their economic development problems, resources and resource constraints, and development prospects and priorities, is required. Knowledge of all of the above countries' disaster response policies and capabilities. The Specialist must have a good knowledge, or the potential to quickly acquire such knowledge, of USG legislation, policy, and practice relating to development assistance; USAID programming policies, regulations, procedures, and documentation; and, of the objectives, methodology, and status of assigned activities. Knowledge and understanding of the organization and respective roles of local governmental institutions and the host country governments.
5. Skills and Abilities (20 points): The demonstrated ability to plan, organize, manage, and evaluate sectors/programs/ projects/activities is required. The Specialist must have good verbal communication skills, tact, and diplomacy. Analytical ability is required in order to interpret public policies, and to assist in the development of revised policies, as required; and, to develop and monitor the performance of budgets, and the development of periodic work plans. The ability to work independently with minimal supervision. The ability to work effectively in a team environment, and to achieve consensus on policy, program/project/activity, and administrative matters is required. Good computer skills are required, in order to manage activity goals and achievements, both technical and financial.

Further details on the statement of duties, evaluation, and selection factors and how to apply can be found on the USAID website: <https://www.usaid.gov/pacific-islands/careers>

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Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) re-accredited as a National Implementing Entity (NIE) of the Adaptation Fund

Micronesian Conservation Trust

On June 24, 2021, Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) received communication from the Adaptation Fund Secretariat that the Adaptation Fund Board, during the intersessional period between its thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh meetings, has decided to re-accredit the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) as a National Implementing Entity (NIE) of the Adaptation Fund. Having considered the recommendation of the Accreditation Panel and following the fast-track process approved by Decisions B.28/38, the Adaptation Fund Board decided to: a) Re-accredit the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) as a National Implementing Entity (NIE) of the Adaptation Fund for five years as per paragraph 38 of the operational policies and guidelines for Parties to

access resources from the Adaptation Fund. The accreditation expiration date is 20/06/2026; and b) Entitle the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) to submit project and programme proposals to the Adaptation Fund for up to US\$ 5 million.

MCT first became a national accredited entity to the Adaptation Fund on April 21, 2015, as the smallest organization in the world to receive this status. Because the AF had never dealt with an organization the size of MCT, it had to change some of its accreditation procedures and conditions to accredit MCT. "So in a way MCT was a trail blazer for other small organizations around the globe seeking AF accreditation", said MCT Executive Director Kostka.

Upon accreditation, MCT worked with the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs,

who serves as FSM's National Designated Authority (NDA) to the AF, FSM R&D and other national and state partners to design and submit a proposal "Practical Solutions for Reducing Community Vulnerability to Climate Change in the Federated States of Micronesia" to the AF. The project, which was funded at \$970,000, had 3 main components: 1) Natural assets or ecosystems under protected area management and near-shore fisheries are adequately protected/rehabilitated; 2) Community-level adaptive capacity strengthened to address climate change threats; and 3) Knowledge Management system developed to facilitate future scaling-up and replication of the effective MPA management and community-led ecosystem-based adaptation actions.

This AF project has allowed MCT to work

with the FSM R&D and other national and state stakeholders to establish a National Protected Areas Network (PAN) Policy Framework and mechanisms and procedures to strengthen the network, including an associated PAN Operations Manual, to issue several grants to local organizations supporting protected areas development in the FSM and to support the placement and training of PAN Coordinators in each of the FSM States. This current grant is slated to end in September 2022. MCT looks forward to continuing to work with the FSM and state leadership to develop more climate change adaptation project proposals to the AF. And now with the increase in the funding ceiling, FSM can do much more for its citizens who face the daily impacts of climate change and global warming.

2021 Defense Cooperation Dialogue between the FSM & Australia focuses on IUU Fishing, FSM maritime security

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—The 2021 Defense Cooperation Dialogue between the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Government of Australia has recently concluded, with its success measured by the strengthening and deepening of the FSM-Australia bilateral security relationship and the in-depth and uncensored exchange of views on mutual security interests and challenges affecting the FSM and the Pacific at large.

Both the FSM and Australia reaffirmed their commitments to ongoing efforts and collaborations, such as the Pacific Maritime Security Program, Maritime Security Cooperation, Australia's Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) program, and technical assistance and training opportunities for law enforcement officers.

Significant discussion was focused on how to respond to the dramatic increase of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities in the region. Important updates on the forthcoming Guardian-class Patrol Boats handover in Australia, and arrival to the FSM, due to occur in the first and second quarters of Calendar Year 2022 respectively, were discussed at length, including how aerial support will also be provided as part of the security package. The

Honorable Joses R. Gallen, Secretary of the Department of Justice, shared ongoing plans, initiatives, and strategies concerning law enforcement, security issues, and capacity-building needs in the FSM.

The meeting concluded on a positive note, with Secretary Gallen emphasizing the Nation's appreciation for the assistance and contributions by the Australian Government to the FSM on Maritime Security and Enforcement.

"I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Her Excellency Jo Cowley, Ambassador of Australia to the FSM, LCDR David Perry, CPO Craig Hoskin, and AIRCDRE Stephen Edgeley, Director-General, Pacific and Timor Leste, of Australia's Department of Defense, and every Australian who promotes peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity with this Paradise in Our Backyards," His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the FSM, said in a statement following the conclusion of the meeting. "Australia has consistently shown honesty, sincerity, and love to the people of Micronesia, and has shown their adeptness at finding capacity gaps and filling them. We benefit every day from Australia's partnership with our country on maritime security and surveillance capacity, and I am grateful that this year's Defense Cooperation Dialogue was so successful."

Launching of the FSM's Low-Income Assistance Social Protection Programming in Chuuk State

FSM Information Services

WENO, Chuuk—On June 22nd, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—joined the Honorable Alexander R. Narruhn, Governor of the FSM State of Chuuk, the Honorable Lester "Danny" Mersai, Speaker of the Chuuk State House of Representatives, the Honorable Wisney Nakayama, Vice President of the Chuuk State Senate, and Bishop Julio Angkel, in launching the Low-Income Assistance Program in Chuuk State. Developed by President Panuelo and funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Low-Income Assistance program is a key component of the Nation's larger Social Protection infrastructure.

Citizens will recall that ADB is generously providing 14 million dollars (\$14,000,000) for the purpose of the FSM's Social Protection programming. Of this amount, seven million dollars (\$7,000,000) are allocated for assisting zero-income and low-income households, with the intention to provide temporary cash relief for households outside of the formal labor sector, such as subsistence farmers and fishermen, and specifically such laborers who do not qualify for the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Program funded by the U.S. Department of Labor.

The Government projects that approximately \$4,000,000 will go towards FSM citizens residing in the State of Chuuk, with more than 2,000 households to receive the assistance in the next two weeks. The

State of Pohnpei launched the Low-Income Assistance program on June 8th, followed by the State of Kosrae on June 14th, and the State of Yap on June 17th.

For the purpose of implementing the Low-Income Assistance program, the Department of Finance & Administration worked with the Mayors and Municipal-level COVID-19 Task Forces. After the Mayors and Municipal-level COVID-19 Task Forces distributed the application questionnaire, the Municipal Governments signed off on the forms to verify the authenticity of the application. Then, the Department of Finance & Administration checked household members' income against the PUA Program database and the FSM Social Security database.

With over 16,000 applications received so far, the FSM National Government is prioritizing households with zero recordable income before moving to households with minimal income.

Citizens who are interested in applying for the Low-Income Assistance program who have not heard from the Department or their Municipal Government are encouraged to fill out the questionnaire and submit it to their Municipal Government. The questionnaire is available here: http://gov.fm/files/Application_for_Low_Income_Household.docx

The Department of Finance & Administration can also receive queries on this program via email at social@dofa.gov.fm or by telephone at +691-320-2640/5852.

FSM signs agreement with Australia to provide laboratory testing of medicines for quality assurance purposes

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Commonwealth of Australia to participate in Phase Two of the Pacific Medicine Testing Program which will commence in July 2021.

The Pacific Medicine Testing Program is a program that the Australian Government first piloted from September 2017 to June 1st, 2021 to provide medicine quality laboratory testing services to Pacific Island countries, like the FSM, through the Therapeutic Goods Administration, Australia's regulator of medicines and medical devices.

Each financial year, the FSM was offered three medicine samples to be tested for quality assurance purposes, and two samples to be tested in response to a complaint about a medicine. The quality assurance testing was focused on non-communicable disease (NCD) medicines and antibiotics. The costs of all laboratory testing services were born by the Australian Government, and the FSM was only required to pay the freight cost for sending the medicine samples to Canberra, Australia, for testing.

During the short signing ceremony, Acting Secretary of the Department of Health & Social Affairs, Mr. Marcus Samo, and Her Excellency Jo Cowley, Ambassador of Australia to the FSM, affirmed mutual agreement and understanding with respect to the testing program offered by the Australian Government. Witnessing the signing were Deputy Assistant Secretary Kenmore Salvador from the Department of Foreign Affairs; Mr. Takuro Steele from the Australian Embassy in Pohnpei; and Mr. Dionisio Saimon, Mr. Stuard Penias, and Ms. Resel Elias from the Department of Health & Social Affairs.

In line with the pilot program, Phase Two will continue to provide access to the expertise and laboratory testing services of the Therapeutic Goods Administration, with all costs of laboratory testing services again being born by the Australian Government.

"While I regret I could not attend the signing ceremony myself," His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the FSM, said in a statement, "I take this opportunity to again recognize our Nation's close ties with the People and Government of



Acting Secretary Marcus Samo shakes hands with Ambassador Cowley; also pictured include Mr. Stuard Penias; Mr. Dionisio Saimon; Mr. Kenmore Salvador; and Mr. Takuro Steele

Australia. On behalf of our Nation, and also in my personal capacity as a Micronesian citizen, I thank you, Ambassador Cowley, and the People and Government of Australia, for your ceaseless commitments to our own development priorities. Whether its through our security ties against illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, such as through the gifting of patrol boats and training of our maritime wing, or through the Pacific Medicine Testing Program to provide laboratory testing services wherein we are now about to move forward to Phase Two, I thank you for your kindness, your compassion, and your sincerity."

"If you ever feel compelled to convince your parliament, your media, or your family, that the Pacific Medicine Testing Program has immense value to our Nation and our citizens, let me kindly note that we do not have the necessary capacity to do laboratory testing on the medicines that we procure and use in the FSM. The Pacific Medicine Testing Program is how we get that done. The positive results may not always be measurable, but they are visibly and demonstrably real. Thank you so much."

On Tuesday, June 22nd, 2021, Patricia Bonzi Arthur passed away at the age of 84. Patricia, or Patti, was born on March 7th, 1937 in Pasadena California. She lived in Pasadena until she met and married Bob Arthur on November 26th, 1955. They had been married for 65 years.

She was always up for an adventure which had them moving their family multiple times over the years. For a year in 1967, they lived on the island of Roatan off the coast of Honduras. Their dream of living in a tropical paradise finally came true when they found a home in Pohnpei in September of 1971. Bob, Patti, and their 4 children, moved to the island to build the Village Hotel. For 42 years, Bob and Patti called Pohnpei their home.

Patti was a vibrant and compassionate soul, who was always willing to lend a helping hand. She forged lifelong friendships with people from all over the world and was an inspiration to many.

Patti is survived by her husband, Bob; their children, Peter, Janet, James, and Jeremy; their 14 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild. Per her wishes, Patti's funeral was a small family gathering in her home in California. She will be greatly missed by family and friends alike. We love you and we'll see you again one day.



In Loving Memory
Patricia B. Arthur

President Panuelo is received by Governor Narruhn & Speaker Simina, discusses Law & Order, Postal Service, Infrastructure, Environmental Protection, & Low-Income Assistance Social Protection Programming

FSM Information Services

WENO, Chuuk—On June 21st, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—arrived in the State of Chuuk to formally launch the Low-Income Assistance Program there. Prior to the launching on June 22nd, President Panuelo engaged in both formal and informal meetings with the Honorable Alexander R. Narruhn, Governor of the State of Chuuk, and the Honorable Wesley W. Simina, Speaker of the 22nd FSM Congress.

Amongst the voluminous number of topics explored in depth, arguably the most immediately substantive were on the topics of law and order, the quality and efficiency of the FSM Postal Service in Chuuk, major infrastructure projects in Chuuk and the Nation at large, environmental protection concerns, and the launching of the Low-Income Assistance Program developed by President Panuelo and funded by the Asian Development Bank.

Regarding the topic of law and order, President Panuelo, Governor Narruhn, and Speaker Simina discussed at length a series of commitments to, and arguable transgressions of, the rule of law. The tangible result of the discussions included the President's commitment to, where appropriate, look into the outcome regarding a financial settlement between

the State of Chuuk's former administration and an international commercial air carrier; the FSM National Government's, and the Chuuk State Government's, interest to ensure that justice occurs for the wife and children of a recent murder victim; and the acquisition of additional funding to support public safety initiatives.

On the latter, Governor Narruhn expressed to President Panuelo that while the Honorable Tiwiter Aritos, one of the Senators representing Chuuk in the FSM Congress, had given \$20,000 for public safety trainings, that more funding would be necessary to ensure both officer recruitment and officer training were held to a suitable standard.

Regarding the topic of the FSM Postal Services, Governor Narruhn described the People of Chuuk's concerns with the limited staffing and physically small building. The Governor suggested that Weno, Chuuk State's urban center, would benefit from an additional FSM Post Office, on the premise that at present incoming parcels often remain in large shipping containers at the airport due to lack of space in town. President Panuelo agreed in principle, and advised that he would assign the FSM Postmaster General to look into the feasibility of opening a second Post Office in Weno.

Additionally on this topic, President Panuelo noted that it remains the intent of

the FSM National Government to construct an FSM Post Office in Faichuk. Though construction has been delayed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, it remains a key infrastructure priority for the Nation.

Regarding the topic of infrastructural development more generally, President Panuelo, Governor Narruhn, and Speaker Simina spoke at length about the Pave the Nation project and the urgency with which Chuuk State requires climate-resilient roads. While President Panuelo noted his appreciation for the World Bank's commitment of \$40,000,000 for this purpose, the President also spoke about his hope for His Excellency Joseph R. Biden Jr., President of the United States of America, to consider allowing the FSM, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau to become eligible for the Territorial and Puerto Rico Highway Program.

Regarding the topic of environmental protection, Governor Narruhn and Speaker Simina advised President Panuelo that two shipwrecks resulting from World War 2 are at very high risk of leaking approximately 149,000 liters of oil. The Governor expressed significant concern that, if the ships collapse, that the island of Fefan will be heavily impacted.

President Panuelo responded by noting that the FSM has a bilateral engagement with the Honorable Yoshihide Suga, Prime Minister of Japan, towards the end of June,

and further that the FSM has bilateral defense talks with the United States via the Joint Committee Meeting (JCM) process in the coming weeks. "I will make it a point to discuss this with both Japan and the United States," President Panuelo said, requesting that the Governor formalize his concern in a combination of letter and informative briefing package, so that the President can reference it at the upcoming bilateral engagements.

The final topic of significant discussion was with regards to the Low-Income Assistance Program and the Government of the State of Chuuk's sincere appreciation for it.

"We're glad we'll be able to assist 4,000 zero and low-income households in Chuuk State," President Panuelo said to Governor Narruhn. "In case it's not enough, I'll gently remind my dear friend Speaker Simina that the Executive Branch has requested the Congress to appropriate some of our own local revenues, too, so we can feel it from our hearts—the sincerity of generosity—and show ADB our appreciation for their assistance by taking as much ownership as possible."

The meeting ended on a positive note, with President Panuelo affirming to Governor Narruhn that the FSM National Government will always work hand-in-hand with the Chuuk State Government in order to provide essential services to the Nation's citizens.

Major new step in Yap fiber optic roll out

Digital FSM Project

The Digital FSM Project's roll out of fiber optic cable on the main island of Yap has taken a major new step. Three Yapese surveyors have received training to begin the process of identifying how and where the new fiber optic cable will be laid across the island, even as the hardware and materials to support this roll out are already being readied.

"The training was a success," said FSMTCC's (OAE) National Roll Out Manager FTTH Peter Garamfel. He admitted though that doing the training remotely due to COVID-19 travel restrictions had its challenges, "these challenges were mainly technical, but they were adequately addressed by UCG," stated Garamfel. "The people providing the training have never set foot on Yap, and don't know how people live and dwell and the infrastructures are less developed. Nonetheless, we had a good team in UCG that worked diligently to

make sure our surveyors were assisted and directed and enable survey work to progress."

Fiber optic cable is one of the key elements of the FSM government's plan to improve and develop FSM's telecommunications landscape. The ultra-fast speed and reliability that fiber optic cable brings allows sophisticated e-commerce, e-government facilities and even home internet use to vastly improve. The Digital FSM Project has already enabled new telecom operators to be granted licenses to assist in the further development of FSM's telecommunications.

"We identified early that local field surveyors were crucial to the success of the fiber network design," said CEO of Universal Communications Group (UCG), Muralee Siva. UCG has been contracted to supervise the roll out of fiber optic cable in three of FSM's states. "UCG and FSMTCC made the decision to train local surveyors as part of the

strategy to empower and upskill local staff to perform 100% of the in-country work," Siva added. "The detailed training program has been completed for Yap and the project currently has three trained surveyors, which will increase to 15 as we progress through the Islands of Yap, Pohnpei and Kosrae."

UCG currently operates across Australia and also has national coverage in New Zealand. In Australia, UCG designed, constructed, and operated the first ever fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) network in Australia (Sanctuary Cove, Gold Coast) and has been heavily involved in the deployment of the National Broadband Network – connecting over 45,000 buildings and 270,000 end users.

Mr Garamfel recognized the challenges UCG faced without firsthand knowledge of Yap's on-the-ground realities. "The trainer's country is far more developed in terms of telecommunications technology, and so when we tell them we're having

issues logging on to the internet or we're having uploading issues, it's hard for them to understand," Garamfel admitted. "Nonetheless, we had a good team at UCG that worked diligently to make sure our surveyors were assisted and directed and enable survey work to progress."

Despite the challenges, Garamfel is confident that progress on the roll out of the fiber network will be good for Yap. "I am very optimistic that the fiber roll out to homes in Yap will be a success story and that it'll improve the quality of lives for the people of Yap," he stated. He also acknowledged the pivotal role that the World Bank has played in providing the grant that helped fund the FSM Digital Project. "This is something that Yap does not have the resources to fund and so it would not be able to accomplish and would widen the digital divide," he admitted. "The FTTH project is indeed an opportunity for Yap and other states within the Federated States of Micronesia."



College of Micronesia-FSM

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Yap Campus is located on the island of Yap. It about 210 students each semester and about 18 – 200 students during summer. The campus offers Associate of Science (AS) degree in Teacher Education – Elementary, Associate of Applied Science (AAS) Degrees in Telecommunications Technology, Electronics Technology, and Building Technology. Certificate of Achievement programs offered are: General Studies, Health Assistant/Community Health Sciences, Preschool Teacher Education, Trial Counselors, Construction Electricity, Electronics Engineering, and Telecommunications Engineering. In addition to credited courses, Yap Campus has the flexibility and capability to offer tailored non-credit trainings/ courses to address expressed needs in the communities. It hosts several sponsored programs: Cooperative Research & Extension (CRE), Upward Bound, and Peer Counseling Center. Campus facilities to support student learning include a research lab, a fully equipped laboratory, Learning Resources Center, Computer Lab with internet connectivity, Voc Ed Computer Lab with specialized equipment, shops for voc ed programs, and 4 classrooms. Facilities to be constructed within the year include a student center and a classroom building.

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