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SPECIAL EXTENDED 24-PAGE EDITION

Police set up a special task force in search for Kency Mack now missing from Ahnd for over three weeks



By Bill Jaynes
 The Kaselehlie Press

July 16, 2021

Pohnpei—Director of Pohnpei's Department of Public Safety Patrick Carl said today that he has ordered the establishment of a task force specifically to investigate the disappearance of Kency Mack from one of Ahnd's atoll islands. The task force is also tasked with organizing a systematic search of the islands in the area.

Carl said that Mack was last seen at approximately 10:00 on the island in late June. He said Mack was reported as a missing person three days later but could not tell us who made the report. He tasked Chief Joel with providing us with details, but at publication deadline time the Chief had not yet done so.

Carl said that it was not unusual for Mack to take off by himself for a few days at a time but that the person who reported him to be missing became worried after he had not returned after a longer period of time than he usually was away. He has now been missing for more than three weeks.

One local who knows Mack well ranted about the police response to Mack's disappearance as compared to when former FSM Senator went missing in the same area. Carl

See "Jency Mack" on page 4

Three athletes representing the FSM at Tokyo Olympics with first competition on July 25

By Bill Jaynes
 The Kaselehlie Press

July 19, 2021

FSM—Three athletes are set to represent the FSM in the Olympics in Tokyo. The first of the events for the FSM athletes will be Taeyanna Adam's competition in the women's 100-meter breaststroke on July 25. Tasi Limtiaco will be competing the men's 200-meter individual medley on July 28. The individual medley consists of 50 meters each of the butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle. Scott Fiti will compete last in athletics in the men's 100-meter run on July 31.

By publication time, all of the athletes will have arrived at the Games Villages. Taeyanna Adams was chosen to carry the FSM flag during the opening ceremonies.

Each of the FSM athletes submitted their biographical data to the FSM National Olympic Committee and are below:

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FSM charges FSM flagged vessel with illegal fishing operations including shark finning

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

July 9, 2021

FSM—On July 9, the government of the Federated States of Micronesia filed criminal charges against the owners and operators of FSM flagged vessel Queen Isabella 88. The charges are for fisheries crimes allegedly committed while sailing under the FSM flag in Kiribati and Nauru EEZs, including shark finning, failure to report by-catch, and mistreatment of a whale shark.

Based on the charges, FSM Police Officers arrested vessel Master Wu Ming Kuo, Captain Lai Hsiu Sheng, Chief Engineer Park Min Gyu, and Assistant Engineer Yoon Sung Tae based on a court order directing them to do so. They also seized the Queen Isabella 88 which is owned by Citypro Management Limited. The vessel is currently in Pohnpei’s anchorage area and under surveillance.

The criminal information in support of criminal charges against the owners and the operators says that on December 7, 2019 while in Nauru’s waters, the captain of the

vessel did not record by-catches that were discarded overboard. It further alleges that on January 7, 2020 while in Kiribati waters, the vessel caught 10 silky sharks in their nets and instead of releasing them unharmed as required by law, they cut off their fins and threw them overboard while alive but unable to swim. They additionally did not record those catches. Then on January 10, 2020, a whale shark was caught in the vessel’s net. Instead of taking care to release the whale shark unharmed, the defendants’ allegedly boated the majestic fish and only after what prosecutors characterized as “disturbing conversation with the Observer on board the vessel, the Master released the whale shark by rolling it off the net.”

For the crime of misreporting or failure to report by-catch released back into the sea, defendants face fines of not less than \$40,000 and not more than \$100,000. Prosecutors also charged the defendants with five additional charges related to violation of laws regarding protection of silky sharks and whale sharks. Each of those charges carries a potential fine of not less than \$50,000 and not more than \$250,000.

The FSM Government also filed civil charges against the owners and operators of the Queen Isabella 88, asking the Court for additional civil penalties including forfeiture of the vessel and everything on board.

NORMA Pacific Island Regional Oceanscape Program implementation on track for successful completion

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

July 7, 2021

FSM—At the request of FSM National Oceanic Resources Management Authority (NORMA), the FSM Office of the National Public Auditor (ONPA) conducted an audit of the progress of the Pacific Island Regional Oceanscape Program (PROP). Unlike the conclusions of the previous audit, which said that NORMA was not on track to complete implementation of PROP, this audit says that because of a one-year extension, NORMA is on track to completion by the new deadline of September 30, 2021.

The program, which is being funded by the International Development Association of the World Bank, has been implemented by NORMA since 2015. The objective of the PROP is to strengthen the shared management of selected Pacific Island oceanic and coastal fisheries, and the critical habitats upon which they depend.

Auditors concluded that NORMA continues to implement project activities relating to institutional strengthening and capacity building; activities that relate to meeting Disbursement Linked Indicators for strengthened management of tuna

fisheries; and activities that are based on the annual work plan and budget.

Auditors also concluded that a lack of Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) support and other challenges delayed the project’s full implementation.

“FFA did not provide initial required support needed for procurement activities, documentation for national level project procurement processing and daily implementation of the PROP project;

“There was no Procurement Specialist until late September 2017 (two years into the program), and no recruitment for both Finance Officer and Safeguard Specialist to assist FSM PROP;

“and, NORMA encountered difficulty in obtaining timely approvals for procurement.”

The PROP project has meant a substantial development and improvement of fisheries monitoring technology and many other technical improvements in management of oceanic and coastal fisheries and is on track for project completion by the project’s deadline date bringing with it the technical developments achieved during the project’s lifetime.



The Kaselehlie Press

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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

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Despite FSM border closure, FSM delegation including President goes to Hawaii for high level defense talks

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

July 19, 2021

FSM—Last week President David Panuelo, some of his cabinet members, support staff and some members of Congress left Pohnpei for Hawaii. According to a FSM press release describing a meeting between President Panuelo and Hawaii Governor David Ige, the FSM leaders left the FSM during the pandemic with the primary purpose of “FSM-US high-level defense talks, which the FSM National Government sees as crucial for ensuring the Nation’s security.”

According to the press release, the President also intends to meet “with various friends, partners, and allies in Hawaii, such as the East-West Center, the Pacific Islands Development Program, Hawaii Green Growth, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, and more.”

According to a high-level non-cabinet member of the delegation, the Presidents of Palau and of the Republic of the Marshall Islands are also in Hawaii to participate in the US Defense talks. Other than “defense”, the FSM government would not

comment on the substance of those meetings other than to say that they are sensitive and important.

As of this morning, the Emergency order closing FSM’s borders is still in place. Members of the President’s entourage were not

given any indication of how or when they might return.

According to one FSM Congressman, some members will be having meetings with the FSM COVID-19 Task Force to discuss the current need for the emergency declaration, but as of now, that declaration is still in

place with only limited repatriation from Guam after quarantine in Guam and then quarantine again on arrival in the FSM.

The press release on the meeting with Governor Ige said that this trip is the first the President has engaged in since March of 2020.

Deorio and Oliver ask Court to order FSM President to make overdue final decision on their employment

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

July 13, 2021

Pohnpei—The attorney for Norleen Oliver and Mark Deorio today filed a petition for writ of mandamus regarding their individual employment statuses at the FSM National Government. A writ of mandamus is a court order requiring a government official to properly fulfill their official duties. In this case, Oliver and Deorio are asking the FSM Supreme Court to order President David Panuelo to make the final required decision on their employment statuses.

In October of 2020, both Deorio and Oliver received notices of proposed termination. The proposed firings were for actions they took regarding a Congress special project to pave a road to Patricia Edwin’s family home through property over which Oliver serves as custodian. The FSM Congress had passed a bill for the special project.

Both Oliver and Deorio responded in writing to the notices of proposed terminations but were subsequently fired from their positions in the Department of TC&I and the Department of Health and Social Services. On November 30, they each wrote to the Personnel Office to appeal the terminations as allowed by the FSM Public Service System Act. After several administrative hearings, the ad hoc panels found that neither Deorio or Oliver had committed a wrongdoing. On April 20, 2021, the ad hoc panels issued two separate findings reversing the termination decisions and recommended that the two employees be reinstated with full retroactive pay.

The ad hoc panel’s findings are recommendations to be sent to the highest management official for final decision, in this case, President David Panuelo. The petition for writ of mandamus says that the FSM Personnel Office forwarded the final recommendation of the panels to President Panuelo on April 23. As of the date of the petition, the President had not rendered his final decision.


The petition says that without that decision,

Deorio and Oliver cannot move on with efforts to either return to work or secure employment elsewhere. They have been out of work since October 2020.

The petitioners’ attorney points out that though her clients could ask the Court for a judicial review of their terminations, the court has decided on many occasions that administrative procedures must first be exhausted. Because the President has not issued a decision, her clients are left on hold for legal remedies.



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The Executive Director provides leadership, strategic direction, and resources to the work of TNC and its partners within Micronesia (the Federated States of Micronesia, Republics of Palau, Kiribati and the Marshall Islands, Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) and Polynesia (American Samoa and French Polynesia). The Executive Director is accountable for the Micronesia and Polynesia Programs’ success in implementing TNC’s conservation approach, producing measurable conservation results and maintaining organizational values. This role will work closely with governments and partners in the region to ensure the development of strong marine, terrestrial and institutional building programs and will focus on catalyzing alliances with partners and agencies which contribute to the implementation of conservation strategies needed to achieve the conservation goals.

The position will be based within Micronesia and will involve travel in the Pacific region and internationally for TNC-related meetings and fundraising.

See full job description and apply with resume and cover letter, [HERE](#).
Deadline: Applications will be reviewed in the order they are received, and the position will remain open until filled.

For inquiries regarding this position, please contact Amber Mello, Lead of Talent Acquisition for The Nature Conservancy’s California/Hawaii/Pacific Division (amber.mello@tnc.org or on [LinkedIn](#)).

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...FSM at the Olympics

Continued from front page

Taeyanna Adams



Personal Data: I am a FSM national swimmer; my main stroke is breaststroke. I live on the island of Pohnpei. I have been swimming for 8 years, and have been representing the FSM for 4 years. I currently hold 5 national records. I am a sophomore at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, and I am a Biology major on the pre-med track.

Competition History & Result:

5th Asian Indoor Games in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan in 2017.
12th Oceania Championships in Papua New Guinea in 2018.
FINA World Short Course Championships in Hangzhou, China in 2018.
FINA World Aquatics Championships in Gwangju, South Korea in 2019.
Tokyo 2020 Olympics in 2021 Tokyo, Japan.

Personal Life & Interests:

I enjoy listening to most music genres and reading. My favorite tv show is Criminal Minds, and one of my favorite movies is Pride Prejudice and Zombies. When I am not in the pool I am either studying, sleeping, in the Ocean, hiking or on the basketball court.

Life Goals:

After retiring from swimming my goal is to attend and graduate from medical school.

Tasi Limtiaco



Personal Info:

- Swimming for 20yrs
- Weight: 87kg
- Height: 186cm
- Date of Birth: 01/04/1994
- College: Yamanashi Gakuin University

Competition History:

12th Oceania Championships in Papua New Guinea in June 2018.
FINA World Short Course Championships in Hangzhou, China in December 2018.
World Cup in Kazan, Russia in November 2019.
FINA World Aquatics Championships in Gwangju, South Korea in July 2019.
Singapore Championships in May 2019.

Personal Life and Interests:

I love anything to do with the ocean. I love to surf and go spearfishing. I am really interested in ocean conservation. My special talent is in spearfishing and free diving.

Life Goals:

After I retire from swimming I would like to pursue becoming a chiropractor. I know I can help other athletes with injuries and help them overcome that. Of course after that I would like to start a family.

Scott Fiti



Personal info:

- Years in track & field: 6 years (2016-2021)
- High School: Chuuk High School
- Weight: 170 lbs
- Height: 5'11
- Date of birth: July 17, 1995

Competition history & Result:

In Scott's first season at Tonoas Goodwill Games in 2013, he was named the gold medalist for the 100 and 200 meter in all high championships in Chuuk. The first competition Scott has ever attended outside of the FSM would be Oceania Games in Tahiti in 2014, in the same year he attended the Micro Games and after the Micro Games, in 2015 he was called to join Chuuk's Goodwill Games in Hawaii and was named gold medalist in the 100 and 200 meter. He worked so hard and dedicated all his time to participate in all the Chuuk's Goodwill Games to qualify to represent the Federated States of Micronesia. Scott's second competition representing the FSM would be in 2016, which was the South Pacific Mini Games in Vanuatu. In 2017 Scott made it to Oceania Games in Fiji, as 2018 followed he continued on his journey to the Micro Championship in Saipan during the competition Scott was named gold medalist in the 100 meter and silver medalist in the 200 meter. In the same year he attended the Micro Games in Yap and was named bronze medalist in the 100 and 200 meter. In the year 2019, Scott attended Oceania Games in Australia and the same year he attended the South Pacific Games in Samoa and the World Championships in Qatar. Scott is now preparing for the 2021 Olympics in Japan.

Personal life and Interest:

- Dedicate his time in helping others better themselves
- Coordinate with sports events
- Spend quality time with family
- Help the community out

Aspires to "try to be a leader to the young people."

In addition to the competing athletes, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) delegation at the Olympic Games in Tokyo, Japan are:

James Tobin, Secretary General
Michael Kohn, Chef de Mission
Greg Harney, Team Official
Karatel Phillip Coach, Athletics
Mae Bruton Adams Coach, Swimming
Akifumi Takahashi Coach, Swimming

...Kency Mack

Continued from front page

explained that the two situations were entirely different in that the former congressman was known to be missing at sea when fishing alone and that rapid response as a potential rescue had been necessary. He said that police have to be cautious in the case of adult missing persons because adults have freedom to move about and that may have been the case with Mack who was prone to wander. However, he said that police and Mack's family members are still very involved in locating Mack. He said that police investigators are currently viewing the investigation

as a criminal matter unless their investigation proves it to be otherwise.

He added that though investigators have questioned people regarding the circumstances of the disappearance, none of them is yet being treated as a suspect.

On July 8, Carl placed an announcement on V6AH Pohnpei Broadcasting asking the public to notify the police department if they know anything about Mack's current whereabouts. He reiterated that request when discussing the matter with us.

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Madolenihmw again a subject of scrutiny as auditors question Constitutional Convention expenditures

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

July 17, 2021

Pohnpei—The FSM Office of the National Public Auditor (ONPA) says that it has referred some matters in its audit of use of Public Projects funds for Madolenihmw's Constitutional Convention (MCC) to its Compliance Investigation Division (CID) for possible referral to the FSM Department of Justice.

ONPA conducted the audit after some elected delegates to the MCC asked the auditors to inspect expenditures of \$40,000 the FSM Congress allocated to Madolenihmw to help the municipality fund the convention. Auditors found that Madolenihmw officials had over-obligated funds in advance of availability of the funds, in excess of the sum made available by law, and for purposes other than those for which an allotment has been made. Additionally, they said that some contractors received payments for services that might not have been provided to the MCC, at least insofar as documentation could show.

ONPA said that "the Madolenihmw Municipal Government (MMG) had no effective control systems, nor an accounting system to ensure the proper management of Congress public project funds, or to administer such fund in accordance with applicable laws, rules, policies, and other requirements." It further said that the FSM Department of Finance and Administration's Division of Budget did not properly review the project control documents, and the Division of the National Treasury did not appropriately review or scrutinize payments requests to ensure compliance with FSM laws.

ONPA suggests that Congress should not designate the Madolenihmw Municipal Government as an allottee of national funds until FSM Finance conducts sufficient training and certifies in writing that the MMG is capable of administrating those funds appropriately.

ONPA also found that MMG did not sufficiently describe in detail the plan for implementing the project.

They also found that there were questionable costs during pre-convention and that justifications for the Project Control Documentation (PCD) didn't seem to actually apply. On the PCD, the allottee was required to describe how the public project is linked to national or state development initiatives. MMG responded that "The project is linked to SDG (United Nations Strategic Development Goal) 2 and 15; improving lives in land."

Auditors pointed out that SDG 2 targets the end of hunger and access of all people to safe, nutritious and sufficient food throughout the year. SDG 15 deals with protecting, restoring and promoting the sustainable use of terrestrial (land-based) ecosystems. Auditors could find no connection to funding of a Constitutional Convention to either of the stated goals.

In terms of questionable expenses, auditors pointed out several, including a refrigerator, vertical drawers, a water dispenser, desktop computer, printer, toners, a laptop, and a computer monitor. The laptop was missing during ONPA's site inspection. Madolenihmw purchased cleaning supplies and other related items. ONPA opined that food expenditures for the Pre-Convention Committee members seemed excessive. There were fuel purchases for the government, the Election Commissioner's office and for the Municipal Police that were not listed on the Project Control Document. The Election Office also incurred unexplained costs on compensating the tabulators of the Constitution Convention election. Meeting allowances for Pre-Convention Committees and compensations of the Con-Con staff seemed to be unexplained.

Auditors said the \$24,253.49, or 61 percent of the Public Project funds was spent on "questionable items that were found to be not relevant or

not used as per the intended purpose of the appropriation law."

As it's last finding, ONPA found that payment requests were not certified by the Project Inspection Official (PIO) as required by the Financial Management Regulations (FMR). Worse, the designated PIO said that he was never notified that he was the PIO for the MCC project. "As a result, almost the entire appropriated amount of \$40,000 was expended without and certifications by the PIO on the purchases that were made for the MCC as required by the FMR," the audit said.

The Secretary for Finance and Administration disagreed with the finding that there was over-obligation of funds by the Allottee because the total amount expended under the appropriation was only the amount obligated by Congress. He agreed with all other findings.

The Madolenihmw government's response from President of the MCC, Shelten Neth and Acting Mayor or Madolenihmw John Rensley took particular exception to ONPA's finding of questionable costs for the Constitutional Convention. It said that all of the costs were incurred directly for the convention and its meetings. The response also mentioned that the laptop is still missing and that Madolenihmw had asked the Detective Division to investigate all delegates and support staff involved in the convention. That investigation continues. They objected to all other findings under that category, saying that all expenditures were directly related to the Constitution Convention.

The Madolenihmw government tasked the former mayor with oversight, monitoring, and compliance of the grant funds. They agreed to ONPA's finding regarding PIO approval of the funds and specifically made no further comment on that matter.

Madolenihmw's former mayor was recently convicted of several crimes related to Madolenihmw's finances.

Australia highlights importance of indigenous knowledge and culture at reception in Pohnpei

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

July 9, 2021

Pohnpei—Surrounded by a display of indigenous Australian art, on the evening of July 9, Australian Ambassador Jo Cowley and the Australian Embassy hosted a dinner to celebrate NAIDOC week. NAIDOC is an acronym for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. It has its roots in the 1938 Day of Mourning, an Aboriginal Australian protest regarding their treatment after Australian colonization. The event became a week-long event of education and reconciliation in 1975. NAIDOC Week celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Australian Embassy began to commemorate the event publicly in the FSM during the administration of former Australian Ambassador to the FSM, George Fraser. Held at Cupid's Bar and Grill, this year's commemoration was the best attended of any previous commemoration in the FSM. It was also Ambassador Cowley's first major public event after her arrival approximately two months ago, further lending credence to Australia's recognition of the importance of the event.

Ambassador Cowley told the invited guests, which included members of the diplomatic corps, FSM and State government leaders, including FSM President David Panuelo, traditional leaders, and community NGO and other leaders, that the theme for this year's commemoration is "Heal Country!"

"Tonight, we would like to shine a light on how traditional knowledge and practices are healing our environment and benefiting all Australians. In addition, because healing country is a strong shared interest with FSM, we would like to direct some of that light towards FSM's care of country," she said.

"In Australia, we are increasingly using traditional indigenous knowledge and practices to heal country that has been damaged or is being threatened by environmental hazards including the impacts of climate change," she said and went on to provide several examples of how Australia is utilizing thousands-of-years-old indigenous knowledge

to preserve and heal Australia's environment.

"Since I've been in Pohnpei, I have been learning more about the centrality of the ocean to Micronesian cultures, livelihoods and identities," she said. "I'd like to acknowledge the steps being taken by the National Government, State governments, communities and partners to heal and protect your oceans and your land, through initiatives such as the Micronesia Challenge and Blue Prosperity Micronesia." She also discussed the value of the important work of the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) in building community-based projects that harness local or traditional knowledge and partner with community elders.

"I'd like to conclude by letting you know that Australian Indigenous culture and Micronesian culture will both be honoured as part of a major Asia-Pacific contemporary art exhibition, hosted by the Queensland Gallery of Modern Art in Australia, later this year," she announced. "The Micronesia exhibit - entitled 'Air Canoe' - will include a collection of over 35 urohs (skirts) which have been created, worn and collected by Pohnpeian women. It will also include recordings of a choir of young men living in Kosrae, called the Rookie Boys."

FSM President David Panuelo was the next speaker and thanked the Ambassador for Australia's partnership in many areas, including indigenous culture and the environment.

Before he began his keynote address, MCT Executive Director Willy Kostka pointed out that Pohnpei custom requires the most important person to make the final speech at an event and that he felt he certainly did not qualify for that task but had no choice but to continue on. Rather than outlining the achievements and mission of MCT, Kostka read a declaration made upon the arrival of the first Pohnpeians known as the Pilerehre, which due to its importance to the traditions and cultures of Micronesia, we print in its entirety here:

"Wahu Pahrekieer Sapwekeikat
The seed of immense reverence for life has been planted on this sacred altar, Pohn Pei, to perpetuate peace and unity for its people."



"Re Koasoakoasoiaher Sansaledek
The people will speak with ease and freedom, not afraid anymore, for the gift of life is abundant and is shared equally among all."

"Edeh Kahkiei Sang, Kahkiei Iong Ahr Ehupenehr
The people worked together to create this accord and with great respect and humility are bound by it- at no point in time shall one stray from this accord."

"Ken Rohrohki Irepen Sapw
The people are the proud stewards of this land and will protect and preserve it at all costs."

"Medewe, Kalala, Wiewia Soaramwahu
The people will speak with great pride of the island's magnificent features and landscape and everything that makes it unique and different from any other land."

"Poadopoadok Poadoapen Sapw Sarawi
The people will continue to speak with deference about, and pass on the events and mysteries, which shaped and made



this great land, Pohn Pei, throughout the generations."

"Kih-Kihiong Pwung Mehlel en Eni-Kei-Ka
The people will forever pay tribute to a higher being, Enihlap, which guided and provided them with strength during their voyage to this land."

"Ahneki, Pwungier Soanemweidek-Sangehr
The people will remember the destitution they endured during this voyage and will forever be indebted and hold profound value to this land, Pohn Pei, and its natural heritage."

The evening ended with a traditional warrior dance from Mwoakilloa.

OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL PUBLIC AUDITOR
Request for Proposal
Qualified Auditors to Perform Annual Single Audits
of the Federated States of Micronesia
Fiscal Years Ending September 30, 2021, 2022 & 2023

The Office of the National Public Auditor for the Federated States of Micronesia invites interested professional accounting firms to submit written proposals to conduct the annual audits of the National and four State Governments of the Federated States of Micronesia for fiscal years ending September 30, 2021, 2022 and 2023.

The single audits will include financial and compliance audits of the Federated States of Micronesia pursuant to the Single Audit Act of 1984, as amended, OMB Circular A-133, OMB Super Circular, and the Amended Compact of Free Association between the Federated States of Micronesia and the United States of America for Fiscal Years 2021, 2022 and 2023.

The audits will cover each reporting entity of the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia as defined by U.S. Public Law 99-239 TITLE FOUR, Article VI, Section 461 (d). The audits will be performed in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, provisions of the Amended Compact of Free Association between the Federated States of Micronesia and the United States of America and its related agreement for Implementation of Economic Assistance Programs and Services, and Federal auditing standards in the United States; including the Government Auditing Standards, issued by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO); the Single Audit Act of 1984 (P.L. 98-502), as amended; Circular A-133, *Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations*; and Super Circular, OMB *Uniform Guidance: Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*, issued by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

In addition, the auditor will be expected to follow the recommendations of the AICPA State and Local Government Committee as set forth in the accounting guide, *Audits of State and Local Governmental Units*, Revised Edition.

Proposals must be hand-delivered to the FSM Office of the National Public Auditor no later than August 13, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. If by postal delivery/mail, it should be received by the FSM Office of the National Public Auditor at the address below, no later than 3:30 p.m., Pohnpei local time on August 23, 2021.

A full version of the RFP document can be accessed at www.fsmopa.fm, or by contacting:

Mr. Haser Hainrick, Public Auditor
Office of the National Public Auditor
Federated States of Micronesia
P.O. Box PS-05
Palikir, Pohnpei 96941
Phone: (691) 320-2862/2863
Fax: (691) 320-5482
E-mail: hhainrick@fsmopa.fm

PTA finance statements proper after adjustments; PTA management practices not so much so

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

July 18, 2021

Pohnpei—Pohnpei's Office of the Public Auditor recently released its financial audit of the Pohnpei Transportation Authority for Fiscal Year 2020. Though the goal of the audit was to determine if PTA's financial statements represent the financial position of the Authority, it also was required to make findings on PTA's internal controls and weaknesses and noted several issues of non-compliance and other matters. As for the financial statements, OPA found that they do present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position, result of operations and cash flows of PTA as of September 30, 2020. According to another finding in the audit, they only did so after auditors made adjustments.

OPA listed PTA 2020 operating revenues of \$1,551,877, an increase of 29 percent over the prior fiscal year. Operating expenses decreased by 10 percent or \$175,539 from \$1,805,938 to \$1,630,399. 49 percent of operating expense were for payroll related costs. Supplies and Materials expenditures had decreased by \$159,207 over previous year, and payroll expenses decreased from \$251,604 to \$237,529. PTA still showed a net loss of \$78,522, a decrease of 87 percent, or \$520,679 compared to prior year's loss. The amount PTA owes to Pohnpei State Government General Fund decreased by only 1 percent, or \$17,429 from \$1,670,965 to \$1,663,536.

In his management letter to Mr. Midian G. Neth, Chairman of PTA's Board of Directors, Pohnpei Auditor Ihlen Joseph wrote of a significant increase in the current year's operating expenses. "The current year operating expenses ha(ve) increased significantly and PTA still has (a) significant amount of non-current liabilities which would require considerable amount of time to pay," Joseph wrote.

Auditors found that lack of proper oversight resulted in a waste of funds. As example they pointed to an agreement with a local business owner for the rental of a generator. They said that PTA has already paid a total of \$62,900 for the rental and still owed \$148,000 at the end of fiscal year 2020. That same generator can be purchased online for \$42,000. Neth's response said that PTA has since paid the business \$100,000 and the business transferred ownership of the generator to PTA. Auditors replied that the transfer of ownership did not remove the finding of lack of proper oversight.

They also pointed out that the PTA accountant, who is not an FSM citizen, was hired locally in April of 2019. In 2020, the board, when deciding on raises for employees, decided to change the accountant's status to non-resident worker and began providing him with a \$600 a month housing allowance even though the accountant already had a home and was

not in need of housing.

Their last example was that PTA spent \$2500 for rental of a space to hold its fiscal year 2020 Christmas party in addition to the costs of food at \$22 per person for 250 people. In FY 2019, PTA had less than 100 employees.

The second finding was that deficient internal controls resulted in non-compliance and possible wrongdoing. It said that job orders were prepared months after PTA had delivered goods and services to customers and charged different rates to different customers without justification. They also pointed out the one employee's travel voucher was not submitted until three months after the travel was completed. Then it included a claim for a car rental that did not look genuine, was dated before the trip took place, the renter's name, address and contact number were only hand written and was a form that is similar to one of the local car rental company's rental agreements. Auditors also found instances where disbursements were not supported with original invoices.

"The condition resulted in non-compliance with Financial Management Regulations, waste of more than \$100,000 and possible wrongdoing," the audit said.

Auditors found issues on non-compliance with the Public Service System Regulations and employee contracts. As examples they said that one of the positions was filled with no public announcement of a position opening. Two new employees with less than a month on the job were already taking vacation leaves with pay. Lastly, they reported that 15 employees had salary increases with only a letter to Pohnpei's Department of Transportation and Administration explaining the reason for the increase of rates.

Auditors also reported a lack of proper accounting and reconciliation that resulted in incomplete and inaccurate financial information. They said that "the condition happened because the PTA accountant was intentionally not reconciling PTA's records and reports with State Finance, although he is aware and know(s) about these misstatements. Instead, he waits for the auditors to find them and provide him with the schedules and recommendations." PTA's financial statements do represent fairly the financial condition of the Authority, but they only did so AFTER auditors made corrections.

Lastly, auditors listed six findings from previous year's audits that still have not been corrected. Those were that the inventory control system needs improvements; non-compliance with Pohnpei law such as proper registration of vehicles; control weaknesses in the management and accounting system, particularly reconciliation; management control for compliance of Financial Management Regulations lacking; internal control weaknesses that resulted in serious irregularities; and non-compliance with PTA bylaws.

Grant funding received from the High Commissioner of Canada continues to support anti-trafficking training throughout the FSM

In late April through early May, 2021, the FSM Department of Justice Anti-Human Trafficking Services Division sponsored a 3-day Training-of-Trainer Workshop in Chuuk. The workshop attendees included anti-trafficking stakeholders from the National Government and the four FSM states. The funding for the workshop was provided by the High Commissioner of Canada in the form of a grant, as part of the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI). The amount of the grant was \$49,733.20 CAD.

The workshop participants, using the knowledge and tools gained from the Chuuk workshop were required to return to the national government and the four states to conduct trainings in their respective communities. The National Government, represented by Mr. Lino Amor, Assistant Secretary, Anti-Human Trafficking Services Division, and Ms. Lori J. Williams, Esq., Assistant Attorney General in the FSM Department of Justice, conducted a Trafficking in Persons Awareness training for FSM Diplomatic and Consular Staff. This was the first training of this kind in the FSM. The training was conducted for staff in the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs and simultaneously conducted virtually via Zoom

for Diplomatic and Consular Staff abroad in the overseas Missions. Representatives from Japan, China, Fiji, New York, Hawaii, Guam, and Portland, Oregon participated virtually. A variety of topics were covered including an overview of human trafficking, international and domestic legal framework, victim identification, victim protections, among others.

Workshop participants from the Kosrae Human Trafficking Taskforce conducted a Human Trafficking Awareness Training for other members of their task force. The attendees learned how to identify challenges and solutions when dealing with human trafficking issues and they also learned how to identify the roles and services of taskforce members. Additionally, workshop participants from Pohnpei, led by Mr. Noriekka Lekka, Mr. Ginny Jose, and Mr. Warren Ching conducted a training for students in the Junior Police Academy. The trainers were joined by additional members of the Pohnpei State Human Trafficking Taskforce. The training took place at Seinwar Elementary School, located in Paliepailong Village in Kitti Municipality. The attendees learned about the fundamentals of human trafficking and human rights. Lunch was provided for all program participants.

Follow-up trainings in Chuuk and Yap are expected to be carried out in the coming weeks. The trainers at the national and state level are very grateful for the information and tools received from Retired Police Lieutenant Dawn Jones and Ms. Carmen Pitre, who

Activity supported by the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives
Activité réalisée avec l'appui du Fonds canadien d'initiatives locales



conducted the Training-of-Trainer Workshop in Chuuk. The information was instrumental in allowing the FSM stakeholders to share their knowledge with the community.

New UNICEF – United States Government partnership to support over a million Pacific Islanders in the battle against COVID-19

July 15, 2021

SUVA, FIJI – Today, UNICEF and the United States Government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) announce a new US\$1.5 million partnership to support governments around the region, including Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Nauru, Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Marshall Islands, with their preparedness and response plans for COVID-19.

The United States Chargé d'Affaires, Tony Greubel, said "The United States is proud to be a partner to governments

across the Pacific, including the Ministry of Health in Fiji, to respond to the ongoing COVID-19 situation. Strong partnerships and collaboration are critical in our efforts to stop the spread of this virus. This is a unique moment in history, and it requires leadership. We will continue to do all we can to build a world that is safer and more secure against the threat of infectious disease."

This partnership will support the readiness, delivery, and post-delivery monitoring of COVID-19 vaccines in these Pacific island

See "UNICEF Support" on page 12



Vacancies

Legal Officer

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (Forum Secretariat) is the region's premier political and economic policy organisation, with a vision of helping to create a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives.

The international organisation works to achieve this vision by fostering cooperation between governments, collaboration with international agencies, and by representing the interests of its members - including directly engaging with community members in order to identify pressing needs of the region.

The work of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) is guided by the Framework for Pacific Regionalism (FPR) as:

The expression of a common sense of identity and purpose, leading progressively to the sharing of institutions, resources, and markets, with the purpose of complimenting national efforts, overcoming common constraints, and embracing sustainable and inclusive development within Pacific countries and territories and for the Pacific region as a whole.

The FPR is underpinned by the Blue Pacific narrative, endorsed by Forum Leaders in Samoa in 2017, which calls for a long-term regional commitment to act as one "Blue Continent" as the means to achieve its development aspirations. The Leaders vision was that it would serve as the platform to reinforce and inspire the region in its shared stewardship of the Pacific Ocean, and to reaffirm the connections of Pacific peoples with their natural resources, environment, culture and livelihoods.

The Opportunity

The Forum Secretariat is looking for a Legal Officer to join the team in Suva. The position reports to the Director Governance & Engagement through the International Legal Adviser (ILA) and will work closely with the Governance & Engagement Team to advance the responsibilities of the unit. To facilitate the above, the incumbent will be responsible for:

- Supporting the work of the ILA;
- Law of the Sea – Sea-level rise, Maritime Zones, Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction and other UN Processes;
- Nuclear Legacy Issues and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Rarotonga Treaty); and
- Undertaking other delegated legal duties.

The Secretariat seeks a strategic and proficient individual with a Law degree (preferably postgraduate level or LLM) from a recognised institution with a minimum of five (5) years of experience in the field of law. Possess demonstrated experience and knowledge in the legal systems of Forum Members and an awareness of regional and international legal issues relevant to the role of the Forum Secretariat.

The Benefits

The appointment carries a competitive remuneration and benefits package including medical and life insurance. The starting salary is at SDR 30,412 per annum. At 1 June 2021 exchange rate this salary was equivalent to FJD89,211. For non-Fijian nationals, this salary may be tax-free. To be eligible for this position, the applicant must be a national of a Forum member country*. Applicants must be willing to travel periodically via economy class.

Interested applicants are encouraged to apply through our website: www.forumsec.org where an information package containing the job description and remuneration details is also available. Candidates must include in either their application or Curriculum Vitae the full contact details of three referees. The Forum Secretariat is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Deadline for applications is at 5pm (Fiji time), 6 August 2021.

* Member States of the Pacific Islands Forum: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

Developing Safe Spaces for survivors of domestic violence in Pohnpei

Australian Embassy

To address the need for safe spaces for women and girl survivors of violence in Pohnpei, Ms. Lululeen Santos has been recruited in the new role of Pohnpei Safe Space Coordinator.

Supported by Australia through the Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Women), Ms. Santos will coordinate the consultation and design processes for the establishment of sustainable and inclusive Safe Space Services in Pohnpei. Ms. Santos will work in collaboration with government partners, both FSM National and Pohnpei State governments, while also working closely with local communities in Pohnpei that include women organizations such as the Pohnpei Women Council, the Pohnpei traditional leadership, non-profit organizations, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and other key stakeholders. This will ensure that services respond to the needs of women and

girls in Pohnpei and are supported by local communities.

One in three FSM women who have had a partner have experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, according to the FSM Family Health and Safety Study (FHSS) in 2014. It has been documented in other Pacific countries that there have been a three-fold rise in domestic violence since the COVID-19 pandemic period. Projections for the FSM are similar. The development of the Safe Space project will not only address the projected spike in domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic in Pohnpei, but also address the long term needs of women and girls survivors of gender-



based violence in Pohnpei in accessing safe space services.

Ms Santos was welcomed to her new

role by the Australian Ambassador Jo Cowley and Second Secretary and Consul Takuro Steele at the Australian Embassy.

New Women's Economic Empowerment Coordinator for FSM

Australian Embassy

On 23 July, the new Australian funded national Women's Economic Empowerment Coordinator, Ms. Camille Mouvick-Inatio, was welcomed by Australian Ambassador Jo Cowley and Second Secretary Takuro Steele, as well as Assistant Secretary Stuard Penias of the Division of Social Affairs. Ms. Mouvick-Inatio will contribute towards FSM's COVID-19 response and recovery by elevating economic opportunities for women and their families. This new position is being supported through a partnership between the FSM National Department of Health and Social Affairs and Australia, through Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Women) program.

The long-term economic impacts of COVID-19 will be significant on FSM women with an estimated 70 per cent of pandemic-related job losses in the FSM affecting women, according to ADB data.

Ms. Mouvick-Inatio, will be based in

the Department of Health and Social Affairs, and support local women's groups, national and state governments, international partners and civil society to develop and deliver economic empowerment programs. This includes financial literacy activities, promoting women's economic rights, entrepreneurship initiatives, training and workshops. Ms. Mouvick-Inatio will also work collaboratively with the Australian Embassy and the Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Women) Support Unit.

In FSM, and many countries in the Pacific, women earn less than men and are more likely to work in low-paying and informal jobs such as farming, domestic work or vendors. Women are therefore more vulnerable than men to the short and long-term economic impacts of a crisis such as COVID-19, as they rely on a daily wage and have no access to



paid leave or social security.

Women and girls are also disproportionately affected by the pandemic, facing even higher rates of violence; undertaking more work and care responsibilities in the home; being less able to access essential health

services, and being more vulnerable to economic hardship. This new position is essential in addressing many of these inter-related issues, while contributing to improved longer term opportunities for women to earn money and to make decisions on how those finances are spent for their family.

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA
DEVELOPMENT BANK
Corporate Office
P.O. Box M
POHNPEI, FM 96941

LAND FOR SALE - KOSRAE, POHNPEI,
CHUUK & YAP

FSM Development Bank offers the following parcels of land described below for sale to all qualified buyers:

Kosrae State

Parcel no. 018-T-31, Mukul, Tafunsak Municipality, 468 square meters±, as shown on Plat Map No. 018-T-06 dated January 24, 2020.

Pohnpei State

Parcel no. 045-E-26, Lohd-Powe, Madolenihmw Municipality, 2,031 square meters ±, as shown on Plat Map No. 045-E-03 dated May 16, 2005.

Chuuk State

Lot no. 61955, Unauo # 3, Neauo Village, Weno, 1,423 square meters ±, as shown on Map No. PI-12 dated October 3, 1995.

Lot no. 029-A-06A, Apinmas, Mechitiw Nantaku, Weno, 2,812 square meters ±, as shown on Plat Map No. 029-A-00 dated February 25, 2020.

Lot no. 014-A-18B, Nefin (part), Nepukos, Weno, 170 square meters ±, as shown on Plat Map No. 6022/2007 dated September 9, 2012.

Yap State

Parcel no. 082-H-01, Fitemachey, Dachngar, Rull Municipality, 2,916 square meters ±, shown on Plat Map No. 082-H-00;

Parcel no. 082-H-03, Muut Nu Fitemachey, Dachngar, Rull Municipality, 1,274 square meters ±, shown on Plat Map No. 082-H-00;

Parcel no. 019-H-12, Fitmeyan, Yinuf, Rull Municipality, 2,361 square meters ±, as shown on Plat No. 019-H-00.

Parcel no. 083-H-07, Muut, Dachngar, Rull Municipality, 135 square meters ±, as shown on Plat No. 083-H-00.

- FSM Development Bank will consider all offers for purchase of the parcels. Offers may be made for one or more of the parcels.
- The deadline for submission of offers will be Friday, July 30, 2021 at 4 pm Pohnpei time. All offers must contain the offer amount for each parcel separately, proposed payment schedule and contact information. Offers may be hand delivered to any FSM Development Bank office or emailed to: noras@fsmdb.fm
- Title to the parcels will be conveyed through a deed of conveyance issued by the FSM Development Bank. The purchaser must be qualified to hold ownership title to land in the Federated States of Micronesia and provide proof of qualification.
- All parcels and any improvements thereon will be sold “as-is” with no guarantees or warranties as to their condition.
- FSM Development Bank reserves its right to reject any and all offers made for the parcels, for any reason whatsoever.

For more information, please contact: Nora E Sigrah, Legal Counsel at email: noras@fsmdb.fm

Scholarship awards highlight student achievement, US-Micronesian ties

Habele

Individual Americans have pooled private donations to help promising students in Micronesia attend the island nation’s top performing independent schools.

Habele, a US nonprofit established by former Peace Corps Volunteers, has awarded merit and needs-based tuition scholarships since 2006. It is the only US nonprofit exclusively focused on serving students and schools within the Federated States.

Thirty-seven complete, on-time applications from across Micronesia were received ahead of the June 30th annual submission deadline. Based on the money raised from individual donors Habele was able to award twenty-five tuition scholarships to students attending eight different elementary and high schools in three FSM states.

Checks for the scholarships have been mailed to the schools, and families will be also be notified by mail.

“We are tremendously proud of the scholarship recipients, and take great satisfaction to report that scholars’ grades in 2020-21 were some of the highest since we started the program in 2006,” explained Habele founder Neil Mellen. “There were also four 2020-21 scholars who completed their secondary studies this spring. Those students were Cassandra Hagiltaw at Pohnpei Catholic, Crystal Ruerngun Loochaz and Shereeca Pairui at Yap SDA, and Maselyann “MC” Suemog Yangr at Yap Catholic High School.”

In the spring, Maselyann, a Habele scholar since 2016, wrote to Habele about the importance of the program. “I am grateful for your help in achieving my goals. You have helped me to stay in school, and now I am only two months away from graduating high school.

I am very thankful to have gotten the chance to make it this far with a great education and a school community that has become my second family and home.”

Maselyann graduated YCHS with nearly all “A’s” on her final report card and is now headed to the University of Guam, where she will pursue a degree in chemistry.

Among the twenty-five scholarships awarded are three Memorial Scholarships. These are a special type of Habele K12 tuition grant. They honor the legacy of Americans whose life or work demonstrated exceptional commitment to the people of Micronesia, and embodied the best of the longstanding US-Micronesian partnership. These include the Lee Huddleston, Dr. Marshall Wees, and Leona Peterson Memorial Scholarships.

“The name “HABELE” is a wish come true for our children,” explained Lazarus Ulith in a note sent in with a student’s report card last month. He observed the nonprofit’s name is itself a play on words meaning both the future tense of “to be” and more figuratively “to achieve an ambition.” “You make it a reality which is why you make a difference in their future” said Ulith.

Those interested in learning more can apply, or support the program online at www.habele.org



Invasive Alien Species (IAS)

By **Konrad Englberger** *iSTOP Secretary*

Many people do not understand what invasive alien species (IAS) are, what negative impact they can have and how they come to Pohnpei.

What is the definition for invasive species? An introduced (alien) species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to animals or human health.

What do invasive species do? There are many effects IAS can have on the environment. They cause biodiversity loss and ecosystem disturbance as islands are very vulnerable to biological invasions. IAS have directly or indirectly caused or contributed to the decline and extinction of birds, reptiles and plants. IAS compete with other plants for space, nutrients and sunlight. Some IAS overgrow and kill useful plants, a good example is *Mermeria* or *Lol* in Pohnpei.

How to manage IAS? The three main ways of managing IAS are: prevention, eradication, and control.

Prevention is the cheapest and best practice, this requires an effective and efficient plant and animal quarantine or biosecurity service and people who understand quarantine and adhere to the requirements, like the requirement to declare plant or animal products upon arrival.

Eradication should be considered for newly introduced species that are

not widespread and are known to be invasive in other countries. Examples are: in Pohnpei, the Invasive Species Taskforce of Pohnpei, iSTOP, is eradicating six IAS which can be seen in the below picture. The species under eradication are: False Sakau, Chain of Love, Ivy Gourd, Octopus tree, Honolulu Rose and Purple Trumpet Vine. More than 90% of the 6 species are eradicated. iSTOP needs support from the community to report if any of the 6 species are sited. iSTOP has done island wide awareness programs in plant identification and reporting.

Yap is trying to eradicate the Little Fire Ant which was found to be present in 2017.

Control of invasive plants should be every ones business and all can help by cutting down or uprooting unwanted plants. Good control can be achieved if this practice is continued regularly.

How do IAS spread? There are many ways invasive species spread from one country to another. Some are deliberately introduced as ornamentals such as chain of love, medical plants, and fish like tilapia. For example, the African tulip tree was introduced to be used for fence posts. Others are accidentally introduced with contaminated seeds, in soil, sand and aggregates.

Birds like the sparrow probably were nesting on containers on ships and hitched a ride.

Are there many IAS in other countries that are not yet present in Pohnpei? There are numerous species that threaten to arrive and become established in the FSM. Examples of significant concern are species that are already in neighboring countries. For example, in Guam and Palau, the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB) has already killed many of their coconut palms. If the CRB comes to Pohnpei, the coconut tree also known as the "Tree of Life" will lose much of its capacity to produce nuts. Guam

also has the brown tree snake which has wiped out several bird species and is causing many power outages when they get into powerlines.

The Little Fire Ant (LFA) which was first found in Yap in 2017 can be economically devastating to infesting households and cultivated areas. As a result of the presence of little fire ant some people move away from their land and stop farming. These are only some examples there are many more which are of high risk to enter and get established. We must be very concerned and help to protect our beautiful environment.



...UNICEF Support

Continued from page 9

countries as well as supporting training on the effective management of the vaccines.

UNICEF, through this funding, will provide technical support to and work closely with the ministries of health to strengthen immunisation campaigns and develop effective public health messaging through several platforms to reach people with life-saving information and address misinformation or rumours surrounding vaccines.

Additional support will also be provided to track progress, results, as well as the

impacts of the programmes supported through this partnership.

"Children and their communities in every corner of the world are at risk from this pandemic," said UNICEF Pacific Representative, Sheldon Yett. "We thank the United States Government for its continued and strengthened partnership with UNICEF to ensure that Pacific island countries are able to mount an effective public health response to this crisis."

This one-year UNICEF and United States Government partnership plays a key part in supporting the ongoing planning and recovery activities in the seven Pacific Island countries. It will strengthen the national capacity and resilience of healthcare systems, families, and communities to cope with COVID-19 and the risks of transmission.



Aquaculture initiative in Awak pah

Micronesia Conservation Trust

On June 16th 2021, The U Katengen Moarosed (PGS farmers groups from Awak Pah) visited the Wasa Lapalap Sahngoro, Nahnmwarki of U to present the joint efforts of the communities in Awak Pah and the U Municipal Government (UMG) to designate the coastal areas of Awak Pah from Ekehkodo to Luhke as an aquaculture development site. The group was very grateful to have received full endorsement from the Nahnmwarki, who agreed to be the first person to show his support of the initiative by signing a petition to establish the aquaculture site. In addition to this request, the group also shared the progress of the Coconut 4 Life (C4L) project in U with his highness. Also present and in support of the establishment of the site were the Chief Minister of UMG, the Speaker of the 10th U Municipal Council, and an U Municipal Representative to the Pohnpei State Legislature. Once passed by the Pohnpei State Legislature, this community initiative will be the first of its kind in Micronesia and is uniquely supported by the Constitutional

Convention of UMG. The initiative specifically addresses two U Municipal Ordinances: 1. The protection and safeguarding of the important areas and historical sites of U, 2. Protecting and management of terrestrial, marine, air and the natural resources of the U Municipality. Furthermore, this aquaculture program is part of the U Fisheries Management Plan that was established and endorsed by the U Municipal leadership.

Prior to the above-mentioned visit, on June 11, 2021, the U Katengen Moarosed conducted its 4th community consultation in the 5 major communities in Awak Pah. The event marked a very important occasion for U municipality as 4 Kayaks and 3 coolers donated by the UMG were presented to the President of the PGS farmer group to support their aquaculture and fishery management efforts. The PGS farmers group would like to convey their most sincere gratitude to UMG for the donations. The group also wishes to extend its appreciation to the Marine and Environment Research Institute of Pohnpei (MERIP) for providing approximately 4000+ baby rabbit fish and to the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) for providing 2000+ clams (Hippopus Hippopus) to the aquaculture program. A special thank you goes to the community of Awak Pah for taking care of these valuable contributions to the aquaculture initiative.

It is the hope of the group to ensure that the initiative is implemented diligently. The group also hopes that this program can be scaled across Pohnpei and Micronesia.



Let's go fishing!

Giving away over \$8,000 in free fuel!



2021 VITAL ANNUAL FISHING CIRCUIT

YAP PNI TKK KSA NAU

Registration Date: July 30, 2021
 Registration Time: 9AM to 3PM
 Registration Place: Marina Parking Lot
 Weigh in time: 5PM
 Weigh in place: Yap Marina Parking Lot

Tournament Date:
 Sat, July 31
 Check out time:
 6AM to 8AM
 Check out place:
 Yap Marina

President Panuelo submits to the 22nd FSM Congress proposed bill for an act to extend FSM passports' validity to ten years

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—Prior to the convening of the 1st Special Session of the 22nd Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) on July 19th, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the FSM, has submitted a proposed Bill for an Act that would amend Section 205 of Title 50 of the FSM Code, as amended by Public Laws 10-140, 14-28, and 14-85, to state that “a passport issued... shall be valid for a period of ten (10) years from the date of issuance or renewal....”

At present, any FSM citizen's passport has a maximum lifetime of five (5) years. The practical effect for many FSM citizens living in the United States of America is that upon the expiration of their passport, and subsequent renewal for a new one, they often travel to Canada or Mexico for the singular purpose of easily updating their I-94 documentation with the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services. As an FSM citizen's I-94 documentation is linked with their FSM passport number—which, like most passports around the World, changes upon renewal—not renewing a passport or updating an I-94 in a

timely manner can, and for hundreds of citizens has resulted in, loss of one's employment.

In his letter to the Honorable Wesley W. Simina, Speaker of the FSM Congress, President Panuelo wrote “One major challenge faced by our citizens in the United States as a result of frequent renewal of passports is the numerous cases of mismatch of immigration information between the new passport and their I-94 records. When a new passport is issued to our citizens, it requires a whole set of process and protocol from the U.S. side to register the new passport [number] and synchronize it with the

unexpired I-94. This tedious process causes...our citizens to lose their jobs because their records were not fixed in a timely manner. This bill will [help to] address this difficulty.”

If passed, the bill would also grant the President the power to provide, by regulation, different periods of passport validity.

The President's letter to Speaker Simina, and the proposed Bill for an Act, can be found here: https://gov.fm/files/July_14_2021_-_Validity_of_period_of_FSM_Passport.pdf

President Panuelo issues new regulations to protect the environment; any construction or procurement contractor found violating or breaching Environmental Protection Agency permits & clearances to be blacklisted

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—His Excellency David W. Panuelo,

President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), has issued new regulations in accordance with Section 418 of Title 55 of the FSM

Code. The regulations seek to protect the FSM's natural environment by harmonizing national contracts with conservation and preservation efforts. The practical effect is that, for the purpose of any construction or procurement contracts, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) permits and licenses will always be required if the contract involves earthmoving activities.

have the appropriate EPA permit or clearance before conducting an earthmoving activity under a National Government contract—and then, in the event the contractor violates that permit or clearance, they will be blacklisted or banned from receiving contracts from the FSM National Government altogether.”

“To make the private sector work for the public good requires the appropriate incentive. Long ago, ship captains from England would get paid in advance before hauling prisoners to Australia; the inevitable result was that many prisoners died before arriving in Sydney. In order to preserve life, the Government changed the rules so that ship captains would only get paid based on the number of healthy prisoners who arrived in Australia. It's the same idea for our natural environment here in the FSM. If we want to protect our environment, we must make it financially burdensome for the rules to be broken, and financially attractive for the rules to be followed.”

The new regulations may be found here: https://gov.fm/files/Emergency_Regulation_for_EPA_permits.pdf

A “Notice to Proceed” shall not be issued for any construction or procurement contract falling under these regulations if the contractor does not have the appropriate EPA permit or clearance. All bid documents, invitation to bid, and solicitation of interest shall state this new requirement. Any contractor with a prior record of violating and/or breaching EPA rules and regulations shall be disqualified from joining a bidding.

“For far too long,” President Panuelo said in a statement, “Critics of our Nation's environmental protection and conservation efforts have rightfully pointed out that dredging and other earthmoving activities sometimes occur in violation of the contractors' EPA permits and clearances, presuming there ever was one in the first place. What these new regulations do is mandate contractors to

Embassy of the United States of America

Vacancy Announcement: VA2021.002
POSITION TITLE: Receptionist/Medical Clerk
OPENING PERIOD: July 21 to August 04
SERIES/GRADE: LE-0125/06
SALARY: USD \$12,804



FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION AND JOB DESCRIPTION VISIT:

fm.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/

CONTACT THE HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE:

KolonianHumanResourceRequests@state.gov

DUTIES: The incumbent provides office support with a variety of clerical activities and related tasks in support of the Mission and under the direct supervision of the Management Officer. The receptionist will be responsible for phone correspondence, directing calls to appropriate associates, mail distribution, flow of correspondence, requisition of supplies as well as additional clerical duties. The incumbent is the first point of contact, by both phone and in person, and for visitors of the Embassy and must always maintain professionalism. Incumbent is a liaison between the Manila Medical Unit and Kolonia patients (USDH and EFM).

EDUCATION: Completion of secondary education is required.

EXPERIENCE: At least 2 years of receptionist experience or secretarial work in the medical field is required.

SKILLS: Must know how to operate a computer, possesses basic working knowledge of Microsoft Office software like Outlook, Excel, and Word.

LANGUAGE: Level 3 (Working knowledge) Speaking/Reading/Writing English is required. (This will be tested.)

Selected applicant under consideration will be required to pass medical and security certifications.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO): The U.S. Mission provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.



Vacancies

Readvertisement: Trade Policy Officer (WTO & UN)

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (Forum Secretariat) is the region's premier political and economic policy organisation, with a vision of helping to create a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives.

The international organisation works to achieve this vision by fostering cooperation between governments, collaboration with international agencies, and by representing the interests of its members - including directly engaging with community members in order to identify pressing needs of the region.

The work of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) is guided by the Framework for Pacific Regionalism (FPR) as:

The expression of a common sense of identity and purpose, leading progressively to the sharing of institutions, resources, and markets, with the purpose of complimenting national efforts, overcoming common constraints, and embracing sustainable and inclusive development within Pacific countries and territories and for the Pacific region as a whole.

The FPR is underpinned by the Blue Pacific narrative, endorsed by Forum Leaders in Samoa in 2017, which calls for a long-term regional commitment to act as one "Blue Continent" as the means to achieve its development aspirations. The Leaders vision was that it would serve as the platform to reinforce and inspire the region in its shared stewardship of the Pacific Ocean, and to reaffirm the connections of Pacific peoples with their natural resources, environment, culture and livelihoods.

The Opportunity

The Forum Secretariat is looking for a Trade Policy Officer (WTO & UN) to join the team in Geneva. The Trade Policy Officer will be responsible to the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat's Permanent Representative to the World Trade Organisation (WTO and United Nations) in Geneva. The Officer will assist in providing technical support and advice to Forum Island Countries (FICs) on issues relating to WTO negotiations, as well as on trade issues in trade-related international institutions based in Geneva. To facilitate the above, the incumbent will be responsible for:

- Responding quickly and effectively to requests from the Permanent Representative, FICs and Forum Secretariat Senior Management for the provision of advice, correspondence, briefings, media statements and reporting on issues related to WTO negotiations and relevant UN issues;
- Coordinating and organising attendance and representation at meetings, workshops and training seminars on issues related to WTO negotiations and relevant UN related matters, including

preparation of meeting and workshop papers and briefings;

- Providing services and technical advice, either directly or through consultants, development partners or other counterparts and represent FICs in WTO and trade-related institutions in Geneva; and
- Coordinating representation of the region's priorities on relevant UN-related matters in line with the PIFS's international engagement policies and strategies and on ACP matters in line with the new EU-ACP Partnership Agreement and Pacific Regional Protocol as directed by the Permanent Representative.

The Secretariat seeks a strategic and proficient individual with a university bachelor's degree in Economics, Finance or international trade (a postgraduate degree, would be desirable, specializing in international economics or economic development issues and Diploma in WTO Trade Policy and/or successful completion of WTO internship program). The candidate should possess substantial relevant work experience dealing with international trade, trade policy, WTO issues and economic research in the Forum Island Countries or in a similar environment.

The Benefits

The appointment carries a competitive remuneration and benefits package including medical and life insurance. Salary for the Trade Policy Officer (WTO & UN) position depends on qualifications and experience. Paid in Euro dollars, this range is within an adjusted base salary of SDR37,144 to SDR41,908. At the 1st June 2021 exchange rates this was equivalent to FJD108,959 to FJD138,302 per annum. Your adjusted base salary includes a cost of living differential allowance paid in Euro dollars, in the range of SDR10,189 to SDR11,496. At the 1 June 2021 exchange rates this was equivalent to FJD29,889 to FJD33,722. This salary is also dependent on foreign exchange rates at the time of payment. For non-Fijian nationals, this salary may be tax-free. To be eligible for this position, the applicant must be a national of a Forum member country*. Applicants must be willing to travel periodically via economy class.

Interested applicants are encouraged to apply through our website: www.forumsec.org where an information package containing the job description and remuneration details is also available. Candidates must include in either their application or Curriculum Vitae the full contact details of three referees. The Forum Secretariat is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Deadline for applications is at **5pm (Fiji time), 13 August 2021.**

* Member States of the Pacific Islands Forum: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

Habele Outer Island Education Fund presents Model Loom for Weaving Connections Project:

U.S. Embassy Kolonia

On Tuesday, July 13, Chargé d' Affaires Kristin Westphal and Grants Management Specialist Cheryl Burkindine, Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs received a model loom from the Habele Weaving Connections Project. Habele Outer Island Education Fund (Habele) is a U.S.-based nonprofit organization that works closely with schools in the FSM to promote education, science, and STEM programs. In 2020 Habele received a \$35,550 grant from the U.S. Government through the Department of Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) Technical Assistance Program (TAP) for

the Weaving Connections Project. This project promotes the sharing of cultural weaving skills of Yap State women. Weavers from the outer islands of Yap that are currently residing in the United States can preserve their weaving skills by being able to assemble the loom and used readily available materials.

The loom was presented in a brief ceremony at U.S Embassy Kolonia by students from Habele's K12 Tuition Scholarship program, which ensures that Micronesian students have access to quality education. You can learn more about their various scholarships at habele.org.



Cheryl Burkindine, Grants Management Specialist, DOI-OIA; Dalton Redigmal; Sheraton Giltamag; Faith Ilemangmar and Chargé d' Affaires Kristin Westphal.



A Model loom for weaving traditional Lavalava, a traditional garment worn by Yapese Woman.

Awareness on Fishing Aggregating Devices and safety at sea for small boats in Mwoakilloa

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

From the 16th to the 23 of June 2021, a small team from the Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture (OFA), the Pacific Community (SPC), the National Oceanic Resources Management Authority (NORMA), the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and Urmwaka Incorporated visited the small islands of Mwoakilloa. The purpose of this trip was to promote awareness on topics linked to Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) and safety at Sea for small boats, proceed with boat registration and initiate a fish catch data collection program.

The Urmwaka Incorporated is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) formed in Pohnpei in 2019 with the main mission of assisting Mwoakilloa community on the island and on Pohnpei to improve livelihoods. During the one-week visit, the Urmwaka Inc. president Donald David called a community meeting at the municipal office of Mwoakilloa, which included, as key speakers, Clay Hedson (OFA Coastal fisheries expert) and James Wichman (SPC FAD focal officer).

Discussions around the deployment of artisanal anchored FADs were initiated with the communities. FADs could be an important tool for artisanal fishers that could help improve food security. As artificial objects strategically placed in the ocean to attract tuna and other fish, the benefit of artisanal FADs for Mwoakilloa could include improved catch rates, provide easier access to offshore fish species, reduced fuel cost and provide a safer way to fish further offshore. OFA will return back to the island for a follow-up consultation on FAD site selection with the community.

Other types of FADs sometimes reach the island as well, particularly, drifting FADs deployed by industrial purse seiners. Drifting FADs, when lost or abandoned by fishers, can lead to marine pollution or impacts on coastal ecosystems. During the community awareness meeting, the data collection program on beached drifting FADs was presented as an important tool for scientists and fisheries managers to better understand their occurrence, and environmental impacts. Several drifting FADs and the satellite buoys attached were already present on Mwoakilloa, and the arrival of new drifting FADs will

now be monitored by an OFA fishery officer on the island.

The one-week visit also launched the start of a fish catch data collection by an OFA fishery officer on the island. While currently paper forms are used for data collection, SPC and OFA along with Urmwaka Inc. will work closely to train fishery officers, in Mwoakilloa and other islands, to record catch data directly on an App called "TAILS".

This year, Urmwaka Inc. was also able to raise funds to purchased EPIRBs (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons) and sea safety equipment, and these were distributed to all local fishers on the island.

Urmwaka Inc. with the help of SPC and OFA conducted a sea safety training that covered the operation and maintenance of EPIRB units. Mwoakilloa Island boat registry has also been set up and is currently maintained by Urmwaka Inc.

Mwoakilloa is therefore the first island with all of its active fishing boats registered with visible boat names and armed with sea safety equipment such as life jackets, EPIRPS and orange paint to help identify vessels during search and

rescue. One important safety reminder for all fisherman, FIVE MINUTES WHICH CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE, before going out to sea:

- Check the weather forecast
- Tell someone who cares where you are going and when you plan to return
- Make sure all safety equipment is on board
- Make sure your engine is working well

SMALL BOAT SAFETY CHECKLIST



Pacific Community
Communauté du Pacifique
© Pacific Community, 2018
Financed by the Western Fisheries Development Section
Project funded by the Sustainable Energy and Resource Division
Pacific Safety of Navigation Project

In case of distress, call VHF channel 16

Think SAFE At Sea

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FSM Food Systems Dialogue’s preparatory mini-dialogues conclude, state-based discussions to begin soon; all FSM citizens interested in addressing food & health, food & livelihood, and food & security explicitly encouraged to attend & add to the discussion

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—

Preparatory mini-dialogues were recently held across the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) as part of the broader FSM Food Systems Dialogue, which will inform the Nation’s discussions at the forthcoming United Nations (UN) Food Systems Summit in September, 2021. The mini-dialogues focused on the themes of Food & Health, Food & Livelihood, and Food & Security, and served as a prelude to how the FSM Food Systems Dialogues will evolve over the next four weeks, with the conclusion of the Dialogue resulting in the Nation’s input to the UN Food Systems Summit.

Ms. Elina P. Akinaga, the FSM’s UN Food Summit Dialogue Convener and His Excellency David W. Panuelo’s contemporary nominee for Secretary of the Department of Resources & Development, described that the intention of the FSM Food Summit is to bring together the broadest range of stakeholders possible to collectively look at issues relating to the role of food in all aspects of health, life, and the environment in the FSM, with the goal being to agree on means to make sustained improvements in those areas.

Improvements in these areas are manifestly necessary. Approximately 33% of FSM adults suffer from a non-communicable disease (NCD) such as diabetes, and more than 70% of FSM adults die from NCDs. 37% of children under five years old, and 25% of women of reproductive age, are anemic. 79.8% of FSM adult women are overweight, and just over 51% of the Nation’s children are overweight.

Less than 30% of FSM women receive prenatal care in their first trimester of pregnancy. 39 out of every 1,000 children die before they reach five years old (the Sustainable Development Goal target is 25 out of every 1,000—and the ideal scenario is all children survive and thrive). 80% of the FSM’s children who died before they were five, tragically, died before their first birthday. More than half of infant deaths occur before they are one-month old. The causes are predominantly due to respiratory diseases, such as pneumonia, and gastrointestinal diseases such as diarrhea. This data presumes all births and deaths are reported, and often they are not



in remote communities.

In the coming weeks, the FSM Food Systems Dialogue will provide a venue for all stakeholders—to especially include members of the public—to identify why contemporary and historical efforts to address these issues are not working, and to seek to determine superior solutions.

Thus, in the area of Food & Health, the FSM Food Systems Dialogue might explore how to reduce the rate of NCDs in the Nation, including identifying if our country has access to the right (nutritious) food, and who is the most vulnerable to NCDs. Should the Nation raise taxes on sugary drinks? Should the Nation ban the import of certain types of salty foods? Should cultural affection for largeness, formerly a sign of health, wealth, and love, be changed? Should schools implement a healthy lunch program? And, if the answer to any of these or other possible questions is “yes”—how can the Nation go about implementing the solution?

In the area of Food & Livelihood, the FSM Food Systems Dialogue might explore identifying potential small-scale practices to be highlighted and invested in, such as traditional methods of fixing and preserving food. Additionally, the Dialogue might explore how the Nation can improve small-scale production in a way that is sensitive to nature while also stabilizing incomes and generating a wider range of local products. Should subsistence-farmers band together to form cooperatives? As health, education, and economic development—as broad categories—are intrinsically linked together, with one affecting the other, should health, education, and economic development policies be developed collectively instead of in isolation? Should eminent domain play a role in the Nation’s agricultural practices? Should schools teach courses on how to farm,



cook, and preserve food? If the answer to any of these or other possible questions is “yes”—how can the Nation go about implementing the solution?

In the area of Food & Security, the FSM Food Systems Dialogue might explore identifying the most vulnerable communities, determining whether they can cope with Climate Change and the increasing impacts of natural disasters, and their capacity or lack thereof to bounce-back from shocks and stresses. Should the Nation promote migration from remote atolls to larger islands? Should remote atolls and their respective communities and languages be preserved at all cost? Should seawalls and other Climate Change adaptation infrastructure be built? Should salt-water resistant taro be engineered to replace local and native varieties? If the answer to any of these or other possible questions is “yes”—how can the Nation go about implementing the solution?

It is the hope of the FSM National Government that the FSM Food Systems Dialogue will draw connections between other sectors of society, and take datapoints that may otherwise exist in isolation to form a coherent narrative of challenges that can be addressed with an equally coherent narrative of answers.

The FSM Food Systems Dialogue’s in-person, State-level consultations will take place over the course of July and August, 2021, continuing beyond the UN Food Summit in September 2021, with the intent to link actions into policy and budget allocation processes. All citizens, residents, and stakeholders are explicitly encouraged to contribute to the discussion.

“Banana storms—named because they are storms big enough to fell banana trees—are increasingly common in remote atolls, meaning after a Climate Change-related

disaster, you have saltwater intrusion in your taro patch and your bananas have all fallen to the ground,” President Panuelo said in a statement. “Of all the ways it’s possible for our lives to end, for the great majority of us it happens because of the foods we eat, or the foods we don’t eat, or the foods we simply don’t have a chance to eat. Meanwhile, most of our population are the definition of yeoman farmers—we own our own land, and we farm it with our family, meaning that we necessarily do not have large-scale production of any given crop that the average person can reliably find in a market, with limited exceptions. There are certain types of actions the Government can do, the Private Sector can do, and the average person can do, but what those actions should be, and how we can achieve them, is the goal of the FSM Food Systems Dialogue.”

“I call upon each and every one of you interested in helping us address these important issues about the food we eat by reaching out to your respective State’s convener for the UN Food Summit,” President Panuelo continued.

Ms. Elina P. Akinaga is the National convener and may be emailed at eakinaga@fsmrd.fm. The State of Kosrae’s focal point is Mr. Gerson Jackson, Director of the Kosrae Department of Resources & Economic Affairs, and may be emailed at gajackson12@gmail.com. The State of Pohnpei’s focal point is Mr. Hubert Yamada, Director of the Pohnpei Department of Resources & Development, and may be emailed at huberty08@yahoo.com. The State of Chuuk’s focal point is Ms. Myjolyne Kim, Chief of Staff to the Governor of Chuuk, and may be emailed at myjolyne@gmail.com. The State of Yap’s focal point is Ms. Arlynne Chugen, Director of the Yap Department of Resources & Development, and may be emailed at shofca@gmail.com.

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FSM pre-quarantine policy successful; COVID-19 positive citizen & contacts removed from July 15th, 2021 repatriation effort

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On July 15th, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—received a briefing from his technical health team regarding the July 15th, 2021 repatriation flight from Guam to Pohnpei State.

On July 14th, the repatriating persons were tested for COVID-19. One (1) out of fifty-six (56) persons tested positive for COVID-19. That person, including two (2) contacts, have since been removed from the repatriation flight, and are presently under the Government of Guam's appropriate isolation procedures. Thus, a total of fifty-three (53) repatriating citizens arrived on July 15th, 2021.

Per Congressional Resolution 22-06, which extended the President's Declaration of Public Health Emergency to September 30th, 2021, it is a requirement that repatriating citizens be tested for COVID-19 prior to return to the FSM. Further, to enter into pre-quarantine on Guam, all repatriating persons, with limited exceptions (e.g. minors, pregnant women), demonstrated possession of documentary evidence showing they have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

All repatriating citizens are fully

vaccinated, with limited exception i.e. children. All repatriating citizens have been tested negative for COVID-19.

All repatriating citizens will undergo an additional seven (7) days of quarantine at the Pohnpei State quarantine facility in Dekehtik; the citizens who arrive unvaccinated will stay a total of fourteen (14) days. All repatriating citizens will receive COVID-19 tests upon arrival and prior to exiting the quarantine facility.

All repatriating persons will undergo the same COVID-19 testing and security protection regimes. All preventative and protective measures necessary to effectively complete this repatriation effort successfully are being implemented and put into effect both in Guam and in the FSM. Access and visitation to designated pre-quarantine and quarantine facilities is restricted.

The Nation's technical health team would ask the public to remain calm, and to appreciate that this is a sign of success; this is a sign that the FSM's policies, procedures, and systems are working as intended. Pre-quarantine works; the Government is able to detect positive cases of COVID-19 prior to the cases entering the Nation's borders. As of July 16th, 2021, the FSM remains COVID-19 free.

President Panuelo establishes National Tax Reform Commission to improve citizens' livelihood, expand revenue base, and attain or implement equitable sharing of revenue

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—In a Presidential Order dated July 1st, 2021, and amended July 5th, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), has established the National Tax Reform Commission. The purpose of the Commission is to find a means to improve citizens' livelihoods, expand and update the Nation's revenue base, and attain or implement the equitable sharing of revenue between the Nation's States of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae.

The Commission has five duties and responsibilities.

The first duty and responsibility is that the Commission is mandated to conduct a study on the existing taxation system in the FSM at both the National and State levels, with a view towards analyzing and identifying its strengths and weaknesses, and also to determine critical opportunities for improvements and adjustments.

See "Tax Reform" on next page

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Tyre research services; Testing [Inspection] of automobile tire for roadworthiness; Testing [Inspection] of vehicles for roadworthiness; Testing [Inspection] of motor vehicles before transport [for roadworthiness]; Testing [Inspection] of motor vehicles [for roadworthiness]; Vehicle roadworthiness testing; Technical advice relating to the manufacture of tyres; Tyre analysis [inspection] services; Design of business premises for the tyre trade; Automotive wheel testing; Automobile tire testing; Research and development of products; Quality testing of products; Analysis of product development; Evaluation of product development; Product safety testing; Product evaluation; Laboratory research in the field of automobile tire; Weighing of vehicles; Product development for vehicle construction and for vehicle body construction; Design of vehicles and vehicle parts and components; Design of vehicles; Design of parts for vehicles; Interior design for vehicles; Product testing of original vehicle form; Development of technologies for the fabrication of circuits for wireless communication, electronic data processing, consumer electronic, automotive electronics; Automobile technology research; Research and development of automotive wheels; Research and development of automobile parts; Automobile inspections; Development of programs for simulating experiments in the field of automobile tire for roadworthiness; Laboratory research services relating to automotive tire; Testing and research services relating to machines, apparatus and instruments; Mechanical research in the field of motor sports; Structure engineering services of land vehicles industry; Engineering services of land vehicle industry; Material engineering services of land vehicles industry; Research and development of car wheels for others; Providing scientific information relating to performance and operation of car; Design of module for automobiles; Engineering and materials quality control and testing services; Testing of raw materials; Quality control of raw materials; Design and development of virtual reality software, in International Class 42.

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...Tax Reform

Continued from previous page

The second duty and responsibility is that the Commission is mandated to conduct consultation in the FSM's States, and with the private sector, regarding tax reform issues, considering inputs and recommendations from the consultation process.

The third duty and responsibility is that the Commission is mandated to identify options and avenues to reform the tax system, taking into consideration the need to encourage foreign investment and business expansion opportunities.

The fourth duty and responsibility is that the Commission is mandated to recommend options to expand the revenue base and to attain or implement equitable sharing of revenue.

The fifth duty and responsibility is that the Commission is to report to the President in a timely manner, defined as no later than six months from the issuance of the Presidential Order (i.e. any time before January 1st, 2022) on its findings and recommendations, including legislative proposals for consideration by the FSM Congress and State Legislatures, including any amendments to the existing tax laws and regulations.

The National Tax Reform Commission is comprised of the Secretary of the Department of Finance & Administration, who will serve as the Chair of the Commission; the Secretary of the Department of Justice or designee; the Secretary of the Department of Resources & Development or designee; a representative from the FSM Congress as designated by the Speaker; one representative each from the States of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae, as designated by their respective Governors; one representative from the FSM Association of Chambers of Commerce, as designated by the President of the FSM; four representatives from the State Chambers of Commerce (one from each State), as designated by the President upon consultation with the private sector; and one representative from the Office of the President's Division of Public Information (i.e. FSM PIO).

"It could be argued that the Nation's taxes currently administered by the National Government are outdated and inadequate for our country's needs," President Panuelo said in a statement. "The existing tax system does not favor broad sources of revenue, and does not provide strong economic incentives for businesses. Our poorest wage-earners, including minimum wage employees across the country, pay income taxes automatically through their paychecks—despite the extra ten or twenty dollars per pay period being the difference between being food secure and food insecure—while many citizens pay no tax because their income is not reported. I am confident, and deeply worried, that the status quo will impose a heavy burden on future generations unless tax reforms are implemented."

"Everybody has an opinion about tax," the President continued, "Because taxes affect everybody and virtually all the time, from your actual hourly wage to the price of the chicken you eat before getting into your imported car using imported gasoline to get to the store to purchase imported lumber and imported electronics. Businesses need to worry about national tax and state tax and gross revenue tax and income tax and social security tax and import tax, and I'm sure I'm forgetting other types of tax. The Nation needs budgetary support for the delivery of social services, but we also need to ensure that our system is effective, business friendly, fair, and equitable. Just as important, our tax system needs to be so transparent that we can explain it in simple language."

"I respectfully request the FSM Congress and the Governors of the Nation's States to appoint their representatives at the nearest and most practical opportunity, so that the National Tax Reform Commission can begin this deeply important work for our citizens."

The Presidential Order establishing the National Tax Reform Commission may be found here: https://gov.fm/files/July_1_2021_PRESIDENTIAL_ORDER_Establishing_NTRC.pdf

The amendment to the Presidential Order establishing the National Tax Reform Commission may be found here: https://gov.fm/files/July_6_2021-Amending_Presidential_Order_on_National_Tax_Reform_Commission.pdf

The Government of the FSM awards second round of Social Protection Community Grants



FSM Information Services

Palikir, Pohnpei—On July 14th, 2021 the Honorable Marcus Samo—Acting Secretary of the

Department of Health and Social Affairs—presented Certificates of Award to local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) on behalf of His Excellency David W. Panuelo,

President of the FSM, and the Honorable Yosiwo P. George, Vice President of the FSM. The Certificates of Award represent the second round of the FSM Social Protection programming’s community-based COVID-19 awareness grant.

Citizens will recall that the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is generously providing 14 million dollars (\$14,000,000) for the purpose of the FSM’s Social Protection programming. Of this amount, two million dollars (\$2,000,000) are allocated for assisting NGOs and community groups. The community-based COVID-19 awareness grant is intended to strengthen

awareness of COVID-19, inclusive of education on handwashing and social distancing, distribution of soaps, masks, and informational materials, and piloting a gender-based violence hotline in Pohnpei State.

The Chuuk High School received an award of \$40,000.00 to support their efforts in COVID-19 prevention activities.

The Chukich Organization received an award of \$50,000.00 to support their efforts in COVID-19 prevention activities.

The Kuchuwa Youth Organization received an award of \$50,000.00 to support their efforts in COVID-19 prevention activities.

The Kuttu Youth Group received an award of \$49,940.00 to support their efforts in COVID-19 prevention activities.

The Lekinioch Youth Association received an award of \$49,863.00 to support their efforts in COVID-19 prevention activities.

The Namoluk Youth Association received an award of \$48,800.00 to support their efforts in COVID-19 prevention activities.

The Peniesene Pwipwi Youth

Association an award of \$33,000.00 to support their efforts in COVID-19 prevention activities.

The Utwe Youth Group an award of \$47,200.00 to support their efforts in COVID-19 prevention activities.

The Woleai Atoll Development Authority received an award of \$27,000.00 to support their efforts in COVID-19 prevention activities.

The Lien Alem of Pohnpei received an award of \$49,000.00 to support their efforts in COVID-19 prevention activities.

The Pohnpei Women’s Council received an award of \$42,000.00 to support their efforts in COVID-19 prevention activities. The Pohnpei Consumer Organization an award of received \$50,000.00 to support their efforts in COVID-19 prevention activities.

Acting Secretary Samo reiterated his remarks from the first round of awards, and said to this new group of recipients “each of you submitted the applications and fulfilled the criteria we required; you were selected because of what you submitted.”

Mrs. Emiliana Musrasrik-Carl, who represented all the recipients, thanked Acting Secretary Samo, President Panuelo, and ADB for their assistance and support to local NGOs.

Attending the ceremony were Reverend Tepster Paul, President of United Church of Christ Pohnpei (UCCP), Reverend Midion G. Neth, Secretary General, UCCP, Mrs. Emiliana Musrasrik-Carl, President of Pohnpei Women’s Council, the Honorable Acting Secretary Marcus Samo, Mr. Dionis Saimon, Acting Assistant Secretary for the Division of Health, Mr. Stuard Penias, Acting Assistant Secretary for the Division of Social Affairs, Mr. Erick Paul, Assistant Secretary of Finance and Administration, and the Honorable Mayor Kipier Lipwe who was joining online along with the other participants from Chuuk, Yap, and Kosrae.

Embassy of the United States of America

Vacancy Announcement: VA2021.003
POSITION TITLE: Chauffeur/Motor Pool
OPENING PERIOD: July 21 to August 04
SERIES/GRADE: LE-1015/04
SALARY: USD \$10,060



FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION AND JOB DESCRIPTION VISIT:

fm.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/

CONTACT THE HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE:

KoloniasHumanResourceRequests@state.gov

DUTIES: Incumbent safely operates motor vehicles to efficiently transport Embassy employees, official visitors and cargo. Responsible for ensuring assigned vehicles are fully operational, clean and well maintained. Immediately reports vehicular issues to the Supervisor. Completes Motor Pool records in a timely and accurate manner; and inputs into data base. Performs as a designated petty cash holder, and assists the Procurement staff obtaining quotes for routine supplies.

EDUCATION: Completion of primary education is required.

EXPERIENCE: 2 years’ experience in the operation of different types of passenger vehicles is required.

SKILLS: Must know how to operate a computer, possesses basic working knowledge of Microsoft Office software like Outlook, Excel, and Word. Must have a valid driver license in Micronesia.

LANGUAGE: Level 2 Speaking/Reading/Writing English is required. (This will be tested.)

Selected applicant under consideration will be required to pass medical and security certifications.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO): The U.S. Mission provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.

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Tyre research services; Testing [Inspection] of automobile tire for roadworthiness; Testing [Inspection] of vehicles for roadworthiness; Testing [Inspection] of motor vehicles before transport [for roadworthiness]; Testing [Inspection] of motor vehicles [for roadworthiness]; Vehicle roadworthiness testing; Technical advice relating to the manufacture of tyres; Tyre analysis [inspection] services; Design of business premises for the tyre trade; Automotive wheel testing; Automobile tire testing; Research and development of products; Quality testing of products; Analysis of product development; Evaluation of product development; Product safety testing; Product evaluation, in International Class 42.

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“We must reduce short-lived climate super pollutants quickly & at massive scale,” President Panuelo says at the UK-Pacific High-Level Climate Dialogue

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On July 8th, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), attended the UK-Pacific High-Level Climate Dialogue with leaders such as the Honorable Alok Sharma, President of the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (CoP26), His Excellency Surangel S. Whipps Jr., President of the Republic of Palau, and the Honorable Josaiia Voreqe Bainirama, Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji, et al.

During the President’s formal statement, he called for the global community to reduce short-lived Climate Super Pollutants such as methane, black carbon soot, tropospheric ozone, and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). The statement, as delivered, can be found in full below.

During the President’s interventions, he emphasized again the urgent need for the global community to address short-lived Climate Super Pollutants. Additionally, President Panuelo indicated that the CoP26 must adopt the Paris Rulebook, so as to find a solution on carbon markets, resolve the issues of transparency, and broker an agreement that drives ambition from Governments over the coming years to keep the 1.5 degree threshold alive.

“We need to democratize Climate financing,” President Panuelo said. “Accessing Climate financing is like pulling teeth. Why is it so difficult to access these funds? We can’t solve Climate Change if the people and countries most affected by it are unheard and disregarded because we lack Doctorate degrees, fancy titles, and pocketbooks deep enough to lobby for our interests. Our islands are being overtaken by the ocean while California and Wyoming are becoming forever-deserts—scientists have even added new colors to their maps to show how little water there is there now—and British Columbia has the hottest temperatures on the Planet. The existential threat isn’t just real, it’s happening today and everywhere in the World.”

Statement by His Excellency David W. Panuelo

On the Occasion of the UK-Pacific High-Level Climate Dialogue

I would like to thank Prime Minister Bainimarama of Fiji for his statement, and I’d like to thank the UK CoP26 Presidency for their invitation to participate in this important dialogue. I’ll begin with a quote from His Royal Highness Prince Charles’ speech at the historic Paris CoP21. I quote “In damaging our Climate, we become the architects of our own destruction,” unquote. Hence by the same token, “we can be the architects or our own survival.”

The next ten years will be a race against the rising tide of Climate Change. Strategies to flatten the curve in emission growth by 2050 will not save island nations like the FSM – nor will they save lives of many people in larger, more resilient countries where wildfires, heat waves, floods, and storms increasingly and presently harm communities, devastate lives, and cripple economies.

Current commitments and plans are commendable, but I submit that they are deeply insufficient.

They are failing because although they may reduce emissions in the medium and long-term, they do not reduce the current, rapid rate of global warming that is melting the Arctic poles and provoke destructive tipping points, cascades, and feedback loops that we may never recover from. Certainly, Micronesia will not.

Fortunately, there are viable solutions to reduce warming in the near term that can help us speed ahead of the worst advances of Climate Change and buy time to transform the global economy. We must reduce short-lived climate super pollutants quickly and at massive scale.

Solutions readily exist to cut the “super pollutant” emissions of methane, black carbon soot, tropospheric ozone, and also hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), the gases used in the expanding refrigeration and air conditioning sectors that

are now controlled under the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol – a global agreement that Micronesia is proud to have helped inspire. We urge countries to ratify the Kigali Amendment. Full implementation of this agreement, paired with energy efficiency measures, could avoid up to 1 degree of warming – an extraordinary amount. Joining forces to drastically cut methane emissions through a new treaty would also halt temperature rise.

Fast action on all the short-lived Climate pollutants, sometimes referred to as Climate “super pollutants,” will not only reduce warming and allow time for longer-term Climate measures to take effect, but it will also save countless lives and money by improving respiratory health, protecting food production, and ensuring equitable access to cooling worldwide.

What is lacking? I submit that it is political courage. It is the lack of political courage, financing, and strategic action to reduce these emissions as a global priority while we also advance with haste on solutions for mid-term emission reduction goals, carbon dioxide removal, and support for adaptation.

Micronesia recognizes that every country here is increasing its Climate action, and we are grateful for this opportunity to express our priorities and we seek support to help developing countries adapt to climate impacts.

1.5 degrees Celsius is not only a life-saving limit for small islands and poor nations. It is the temperature threshold that could ignite a fuse, setting off an unstoppable series of events that will impact us all.

The race is on. A safer future awaits us if we start reducing the short-lived super pollutants quickly and at massive scale. Together we can win this race.

Thank you for your attention and for the opportunity to say these few words on behalf of the Federated States of Micronesia.

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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President Panuelo receives the Honorable Mekioshy William, Lieutenant Governor of Chuuk State

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On July 7th, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—received the Honorable Mekioshy William, Lieutenant Governor of the FSM State of Chuuk, for a courtesy call.

During the meeting, Lieutenant Governor William thanked President Panuelo for his assistance to the State of Chuuk, and the hospitality shown to him upon his arrival in Pohnpei State. In turn, President Panuelo updated Lieutenant Governor William on the recent goings-on in the National Government, such as his Presidential Order to create the National Tax Reform Commission, and the Nation's statement at the ninth Pacific Island Leaders Meeting (PALM-9) with Japan. The President expressed that he fulfilled his promise to the Honorable Alexander R. Narruhn, Governor of the State of Chuuk, and the Honorable Wesley W. Simina, Speaker of the 22nd FSM Congress, to bring up the issue of oil leaks from World War II-era sunken vessels, and the subsequent request for assistance. Additionally, the President updated the Lieutenant Governor on recent discussions, programs, and activities with Australia.

The meeting concluded on a positive note, with President Panuelo noting to Lieutenant Governor William that he's invited the Governors of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae to a virtual meeting on Friday, July 9th 2021, to discuss the Nation's forthcoming mass vaccination plan in concert with assistance from U.S. medical professionals.



Opinion Editorial

Migrate with dignity. An uncomfortable reading of the perspective of an immigrant physician living in Pohnpei.

By Dr. Mabel Loján Avellán

For those that don't know, as I didn't before moving to Pohnpei, there is an entire UN Organization dedicated to supporting people to migrate with dignity that says 'every migrant deserves to be treated with respect'. For those who haven't had the opportunity to migrate, I would like you to navigate through my personal experience.

I would like to state that I don't mean to disrespect anyone. The truth sets us free, this is my truth and I am writing this as an exercise of my freedom of expression hoping to be heard, to generate a positive impact and hopefully to prevent other's going through the same experience.

I am an immigrant in Pohnpei. The "garden of Micronesia" has been my home for the past 5 years. I have had the blessing to find warmth and welcoming hearts, people understanding and accepting my cultural, language differences and keeping up with my vibe and Latin passion. I was born in Ecuador, a country in South America (not part of Mexico, different country than Spain; even though we do share the same language Spanish).

I am part of the privileged population that could have access to quality education, thanks to my parents up bringing and hard work to pay for an expensive career, they supported me financially while I earned my education and built a career (which means after high school, medical students take 8 years plus internships, specialties, without considering continuing medical education and other non medical trainings). My mother and father lineage are both educators, my father has a PHD in education and several other degrees since he is a life long student. My mother went to medical school and due to pregnancies and health issues couldn't obtain her degree; however she holds the degree of the most compassionate, wise, humble, empathetic mother I have ever met.

I went to a prestigious Jesuit medical university in Quito, the capital of my country. That was my first time "migrating". I moved from my hometown, Chone which is similar to Pohnpei in regards of weather, flora, some fauna and people's kindness. Moving to the big city, the capital, from my small town was challenging but we, my sister and I, were told by my parents we were not allowed to come back until we finished our studies, so we grew stronger and did what we were told to do. My mom accompanied us until her medical issues (arthritis) allowed her to endure the cold weather, my dad stayed behind working harder in every endeavor, crop planting, raising cattle and any other ventures he could think of to produce enough money to ensure housing, good nutrition, school supplies and cash to support my sister's Economics degree and my Medical degree.

We succeeded, because we were never told that failure was an option. We got jobs, continue learning and earned our education. We both were fortunate enough to be hired in high paying jobs and living a good life, working hard. We were seldom able to return to visit my parents, only on Christmas breaks or short vacations. The success in professional life is a had hidden price.

I have traveled the world. As a doctor I was part of a medical team of a worldwide famous medical organization, in charge of R&D. I have always been treated with respect and valued as a good asset. So little did I know about how hard migration would be.

When I migrated to Pohnpei I did it for love. I met my now husband in Ecuador, he got a job in Micronesia and we moved here, a place new nor my family has ever heard of before. This love adventure has been a very educational period for me as a person, as a woman, as a migrant and as a doctor.

I have been harassed, assaulted,

abused by men and women with power and or money who feel entitled to treat people as garbage.

I have learned from the resilience of the people of FSM, which I think they have learned from their history, learning to adapt to climate change, colonialism, etc. but to always raise united and stronger. This has allowed the communities to continue being happy and thankful to God.

I would like to use the "palm tree" analogy from Nacha Guevara (Argentinian singer and songwriter). The palm trees from Pohnpei have helped to understand the parable. Palm trees are flexible during storms, they can bend to resist the typhoon winds, unlike the banana trees that I see on the streets after a windy rain (banana storm). Their leaves are open so the wind can go through without damaging it. After the storm, the palms stand as tall as always.

We are living a palm tree era, we need to be flexible, intelligent, resilient, to adapt to what life brings. We need to live into the storms without losing our identities and the openness of our hearts. We should come back stronger and more beautiful.

This brings us to my professional struggles as a immigrant with a non US passport. I am an unemployed doctor who hasn't been able to get a paid job that fulfills my heart and allows me to have a purposeful life. I am in survival mode. I have struggled with mental and physical health issues, because our health is holistic. I can't be 100% healthy and happy if my talents and my healing heart and knowledge are not serving the people in need.

When I learned about the NCD crisis declaration and the supposedly efforts to fight it to improve the quality of life of the region, FSM, and the world I was excited to use my integrative perspective of medicine, knowledge of nutrition, health and mindfulness practices. I have written many proposals and have implemented a few with the amazing support of few people at the community level. I'm thankful for colleagues, friends and patients who have shared these spaces.

However bureaucracy and politics wounds my heart and breaks my spirit.

I applied for my medical license 8 months ago. I was never got an expected timeline nor a clear process. I assumed that due to the COVID-19 preparedness, this process wouldn't take long. For unknown reasons the board hasn't issued my license nor have they written a formal reason why it is still pending.

Friends and other doctors tell me that is how it is, that is ok, not to worry. They bring examples of other doctors going through the process and waiting for years. That is not acceptable for me. I deserve better, and we all do.

I need to raise my voice, as a Latin that was educated to do so, to speak up against the inequalities, injustices, and racism. I have visited the President Office, the National Health Department, the PSH Director and others who I think could help me understand the process or reach the persons in charge, until today my license is still pending.

Respectfully but bravely, I ask to please review your processes, priorities and workload of the people in charge of the medical license process that would allow medical staff to migrate and work with dignity, to serve your people, and serve our life purpose.

While the world is facing the devastating pandemic of COVID-19, the FSM should be prepared or at least working to get prepared to respond for the SARS-Co-V-2 arrival. Not only the vaccination efforts should be addressed but also meeting the minimal required medical staff.

It is well known that the country has limited human resources and trained medical staff. With the lack of a national medical school, FSM will continue to need migrant doctors with foreign degrees to be reviewed and certified. I would hope in a shorter period of time, not 8 months nor years.



College of Micronesia-FSM

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Successful Pride Walk & Fair Held at Kolonia

Interns from the Center of Entrepreneurship held a Pride Walk & Fair in Kolonia on July 3, 2021. The event demonstrated awareness and solidarity for the LGBTQ Community on Pohnpei. The fair was attended by members of the community where fun activities were prepared including information shared about the LGBT community. UNICEF interns and members of the community began a Pride march from the Red Cross Center holding banners, signs, and posters showing solidarity with the LGBT community, people who marched alongside the interns ranged from children to elderly.

Police Escort ensured the safety of the march that culminated at the Kolonia-China Friendship Gym. Booths were set up that included food, clothing merchandise, and games where prizes were won. A vaccination booth was administered by members of Public Health. Raffles were drawn and entertainment was provided by different groups from the community. This successful event helped participants of the LGBT community be more open and to reduce the stigma surrounding the community. This event was made possible by UNICEF, DHS and financial support from DFAT.



COVID-19 vaccination available on site at the National Campus on August 5, 2021

DATES TO REMEMBER

August 5, 2021 - Student Orientation (Open to all students)

August 6, 2021 - New and Transfer Students fall 2021 Registration

August 9-13, 2021 - fall 2021 regular registration

August 16, 2021 - First day of instruction

August 18, 2021 - Last day to add/drop courses

CONTACT US FOR MORE DETAILS

www.comfsm.fm

Wearing of face masks and social distancing shall be observed



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