

Students Participate In Summer Science Research and Student Internships

COM-FSM Press Release #0809-03
Several College of Micronesia – FSM students participated in research projects, presented research projects and experienced commercial fishing in the Arctic region during the summer of 2009.

According to Instructor Brian Lynch, students Herbert Timothy and Jesse Panuel accompanied him to Hawaii where they presented their summer research projects at the Islands of Opportunity-Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Students Participation program, which supports students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. Herbert Timothy presented a project titled "Diversity and Distribution of Sicydiine Gobies in the Streams of Pohnpei, FSM" while Jesse Panuel

presented his project titled "Distribution, Abundance, and Habitat Preference of an undescribed species of blind snake on Ant Atoll, FSM." Panuel was mentored under Dr. Donald Buden.

In addition Leinson Neth, Jacobson Kibby, and Paulino Balagot all participated in the Undergraduate Research Mentoring (URM) program. All three students spent ten weeks in Hawaii working with UH researchers and graduate students, and completing individual research projects.

Another student, John Dale Charley, was also selected and attended a two-month long summer program called the "Alaska Experience". The program takes students to Alaska during summers to experience life in Alaska, including

commercial fishing. This program was created and sponsored by professors Ray Verg-in and Yenti Verg-in.

According to Instructor Brian Lynch, summer internships, research projects, and experiences including the presentations by Herbert and Jesse's projects in Hawaii provided hands on experience in research and presentation to the students to enhance their science skills.

A symposium on the summer activities is being planned for presentation at the college.

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FSM bids farewell to H.E. Ambassador Miriam K. Hughes

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to serve the FSM in the past two years. She stated that she will keep trying to ensure that the U.S. policies and operations in Micronesia are based on well informed assessments from those of us on the ground". She also mentioned that the relationship between the United

States and the FSM "goes beyond such self-congratulatory generalities as 'good' and 'excellent', and would rather characterize the relationship as 'profound'".

Present at the reception were the FSM Leadership and staff of the U.S. Embassy and U.S. Federal Agencies level in the FSM.

COM-FSM Party to \$867K Grant Continues ...

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training for more than 150 students a year.

Improve the quality and retention of the health workforce in Micronesia by providing culturally relevant continuing education to more than 780 medical providers.

According to Ms. Salomon, the program will begin with recruitment activities throughout the region at the elementary level in order to familiarize young students with health care professions. She also said the program will be created to train students based on the health care needs of each particular area served by the centers. Training and

continuing education programs will include curricula for nurses, dental workers, technicians, public health professionals, and physicians, among others.

For its part, the College of Micronesia – FSM has launched its first Public Health Training Program in the Fall 2009 semester and is currently developing its own nursing program to be launched when approved. Both programs are expected to receive assistance from the AHEC grant.

For more information, please contact Joseph Saimon at telephone number 320-2480, extension 125 or email to saimon@comfsm.fm

FSM National Elections Continues ...

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by the national election commissioner of the State of registration not less than 30 days prior to a general election or 20 days before a special election; provided however, no written request shall be required if in a previous National Election the absentee voter submitted a request in which he or she indicated his or her desire to vote at the same special Polling Place in future National Elections until such time as the voter provides written notification to the national election commissioner that he or she wishes to resume voting at his or her regular Polling Place. Provided, further, that a voter with a valid Voter Identification Card may vote at any special Polling Place designated for his or her Congressional Election District without submitting a written request.

If you would like to fill out an absentee request form, please click on the following link, print out the form, and follow the directions on where to submit the form.

Should you need additional information, please contact the National Elections Office at ned@mail.fm or call (691) 320-7805.



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FSM bids farewell to H.E. Ambassador Miriam K. Hughes



President Manny Mori delivering his farewell remark during the Farewell Reception at Cliff Rainbow Restaurant on August 28, 2009.

A farewell dinner reception was held on August 28, 2009 for Her Excellency Miriam K. Hughes, as she prepares to return home after two years as Ambassador of the United States to the Federated States of Micronesia.

Having successfully completed her two year tour of duty in the FSM, H.E. Ambassador Miriam K. Hughes will be leaving on September 14, 2009. She is the seventh U.S. Ambassador to the FSM and currently the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps. She has made her farewell calls on Governor Anefal and Weilbacher, and is scheduled to pay her farewell call on Governor Ehsa soon before leaving. On September 3, she is booked to

leave for Chuuk to bid farewell to Governor Simina, and at the same time participate in the USAID & HARRT mission to Chuuk where the Department of Defense will demonstrate its capability to erect a mobile hospital to augment delivery of medical services during a disaster/crisis.

In brief remarks, President Mori expressed his gratitude to the Ambassador for proposing ways for both governments to always 'think outside the box'. He expressed his wish that "Ambassador Hughes' tenure in the FSM was rewarding and enjoyable, and wish that she continues to be the FSM Ambassador to the American people whether in her official or private capacity".

The Ambassador, in her responding remarks, expressed her "appreciation and privilege

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FSM Women Action Network Meeting Outcomes

The FSM Women Action Network convened its inaugural FSM Women-in-Politics Network (WIPNET) Dialogue on 18th -20th August 2009 at the Central Facility, FSM National Capitol in Palikir, Pohnpei State, FSM. The theme of the WIPNET Dialogue was "Enhancing Women's Participation in the Electoral Process through Learning and Sharing of Good Practices" and aimed to (a) provide an opportunity for Micronesian women politicians to share their experiences and stories in order to encourage more FSM women to run for political office and (b) to establish the WIPNET Dialogue as an ongoing exchange, mentoring and support network for the FSM women electorate.

Thirty women participants from the four FSM States of Chuuk, Kosrae, Yap

and Pohnpei, including members of locally based Diplomatic Corps, Development Partners and the media, attended the 3 day dialogue. The Honorable Tina Muna Barnes, Secretary of the 30th Guam Legislature, Speaker Judith Won Pat of the 30th Guam Legislature and former Senator Lou Leon Guerrero from Guam, sent apologies and requests for inclusion in future WIPNET Dialogues, including a support letter for C.B. 16-10 from Senator Barnes.

The WIPNET Dialogue agenda ranged from presentations on the FSM women-in-politics project; temporary special measures (TSMs), especially C.B. 16-10 – the proposed legislation to reserve 4 at-large seats for women in the FSM Congress; the FSM election legal framework; and of politics and gender and politics to po-

litical campaign role playing and presentations; sharing political experiences and stories, and ending with "brainstorming" on the WIPNET Dialogue as a potential biennial women-in-politics dialogue process. Participants listened, shared and learned key messages and acquired new sets of skills from the WIPNET Dialogue. Participants agreed that additional "women-in-politics" training be an ongoing initiative and must target women and the general public at all levels. At the end of the three day event, participants agreed to and endorsed the following WIPNET Dialogue outcomes: (a) WIPNET Dialogue to be held biennially as a national initiative; (b) women-in-politics training on "Rule of Procedures" and "How to Formulate a Bill" be priority *Continued on Page 2*

More Cases of H1N1 Influenza Confirmed in FSM

On Friday, August 21, 2009, the FSM National H1N1 Task Force convened to discuss issues to assist in the preparedness and response effort to the several new cases of H1N1 Influenza that have been confirmed in the FSM. Acting Assistant Secretary for Health and Social Affairs (DHSA) and acting Chairman of the National H1N1 Task Force, Mr. Moses Pretrick, called the meeting based on new cases of H1N1 Influenza being reported by the FSM National Influenza Surveillance Coordinator, Ms. Melinda Manglay. During the meeting, Ms. Manglay gave the latest updated details on newly confirmed cases of H1N1 Influenza in the FSM States of Pohnpei and Yap. She explained that in the two latest sets of samples sent to Australia for testing, there were 7 new confirmed cases of H1N1 in Pohnpei State and 4 new cases in Yap State. The samples were sent in for testing on two different dates, July 14th and July 28th. According to Ms. Manglay, it took about a month to receive the test results due to a combination of shipping and testing issues. While information on the patients who tested positive remains confidential, their illness history, including no recent history of off-island travel, and illness signs and symptoms strongly indicate that there is local community transmission of the H1N1 virus.

The Taskforce wants to inform

the general public that as the states department of health services continues with their preparedness and response efforts, there will be a point at which sampling of specimens from suspect cases will need to be changed to meet the progress of the H1N1 influenza.

The Taskforce wants to inform the public of the presence of the H1N1 virus in our communities, but stressed that all the states department of health services are working hard to help and prevent H1N1-related complication.

To help the process, the Taskforce continues to encourage the general public to do the general hygienic measures that includes: **a.)** Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based gel, especially after you cough or sneeze. **b.)** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissue in a trash can. **c.)** Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. **d.)** If you are sick, stay home or in your hotel for 7 days after your symptoms begin, or at least 24 hours after symptoms are gone (whichever is longer). **e.)** Avoid close contact with sick people (standing closer than 6 feet, touching, kissing, hugging). **f.)** Do not travel, if you are ill.

The Taskforce is awaiting recommendations and updates from the Immunization Section and Public Health and Hospital Preparedness Program of the Department of Health and Social Affairs on the work-progress and status of when the FSM might be able to receive the H1N1 vaccine currently underproduction. However, the four states department of health services had already started working on vaccination plans so that they are better prepared to carry out vaccination campaigns.

Remember, if you get sick, especially if you develop a flu-like illness, avoid or limit contact with others and REPORT TO THE HOSPITAL FOR IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE (If you are in Kosrae, call the Kosrae State Hospital first before visiting). Be sure to tell them right away that you might have the flu.

For more information, please contact one of the following:

Pohnpei State Hospital 320-2215

Pohnpei State Public Health 320-2217

Yap State Hospital 350-2115

Chuuk State Hospital 330-2216

Kosrae State Hospital 370-3200

FSM Department of Health Services (in Palikir) 320-2619

FSM Women Action Network Meeting Outcomes

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training issues for 2009; (c) States' WIPNET follow-up action plans adopted; and (d) FSMWAN and partners to mobilize resources, coordinate with WIPNET State Committees' implementation of national and state WIPNET actions and monitor progress of the "Women-in-Politics" empowerment process.

The WIPNET Dialogue is one key outcome indicator of the FSM

Women Action Network's "Addressing the Under-Representation of Women in the Political Process in the Federated States of Micronesia" project funded by the US Department of State Pacific Islands Fund for Small-Scale Development. Other key performance indicators include a publication on women in leadership and management roles in the FSM and a pool of state legal rights training officers

(LRTOs) who would be responsible for the delivery of public awareness and education campaigns on human rights, civic and voter education, and legal literacy training at state and community levels throughout FSM. The project is due to be completed by mid-November 2009. Funding to continue this strategic WIPNET Dialogue is a major challenge for the Organization and its partners.

FSM National Elections Office Explains Procedure for Voter ID Cards and Voting

One of the issues the FSM Election Office faces during FSM Elections is the missing of names from the Election Rolls.

The FSM Election Office keeps a permanent electoral roll which is open for public inspection during working hours. All voters must verify with the FSM Election Offices to see if their names are listed on the correct rolls for the right polling places. This electoral roll is updated with the state's electoral rolls on a weekly basis.

All registered voters are urged to go to their respective FSM Election Office and fill out their Voter Identification Card Applications. All Voter Identification Cards shall be issued free of charge, provided that, there shall be a charge in an amount to be set out in the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to the FSM title for issuing a Registered Voter with a replacement Voter Identification Card. Upon issuing a Voter Identification Card to a registered voter, the National Election Director, or his or her designee, shall make a notation next to that registered voter's entry on the National Voter Register. A registered voter who has been issued a Voter Identification Card must present that card before being issued a ballot at his or her polling place.

Required information for Voter Identification Cards is: **1.) Full name** **2.) Picture (can be captured at the FSM Election Office)** **3.) Date of Birth** **4.) Place of**

Birth **5.) Voting Precinct (village, polling station, municipality, etc...)** **6.) Social security number (Optional)** **7.) Hospital Number (Optional)**

A voter with a valid Voter Identification Card may vote at any VAAPP ("Voting At Another Polling Place") or at a Special Polling Place designated for his or her Congressional Election District without having to go through the entire process of meeting the deadlines for submitting written requests.

If a voter has not been issued a Voter Identification Card, then he or she shall present other proof of identity as required under the rules and regulations and will be able to vote only at their registered polling place where their names appear on the signature lists. Proof of identity is established by the polling officials and voters can use their passport, driver's license, birth certificate, baptismal certificate, military identification, social security card or health insurance card as proof of identity.

In all cases involving an unlisted voter, the Election Board must ascertain the identity of the voter before allowing him or her to vote, either through personal knowledge of such identity held by a member of the Election Board for that polling place or through a valid source of identification, such as the ones listed above, exhibited by the voter. If the voter's identity cannot be ascertained

hereunder, he or she shall not be allowed to vote. Also to note, any Election Board member, poll watcher, or registered voter may challenge the identity or eligibility of any person appearing at the polling place to vote.

FSM Voters who are residing outside FSM can vote either by: 1) absentee by mail or 2) absentee at the Special Polling Place. In the case of a general election, the request to vote absentee ballot by mail must be received by the National Election Commissioner of the State in which the voter is registered not more than 120 days but not less than 40 days before Election Day.

In the case of a special election, the National Election Director shall schedule a special election to occur 50 days **after receipt of notification** of the need for a special election. Preparation time for a special election is short, therefore, the best approach for FSM voters living abroad is to be aware of the election date as well as submission due dates for absentee applications. Requests to vote absentee ballot by mail must be received by the National Election Commissioner of the State in which the voter is registered not more than 50 days but not less than 35 days before the day of the special election.

Requests to vote absentee ballot at a special Polling Place must be in writing, and received

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COM-FSM Party to \$867K Grant to Support Health Education Programs in Micronesia

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The College of Micronesia – FSM is party to a program for the Guam/Micronesia Area Health Education Center (AHEC) which was recently funded. The partners under the program include the University of Guam (UOG), the University of Hawaii (UH), the Guam Community College (GCC), the College of Micronesia – FSM (COM-FSM), the College of the Marshall Islands (CMI), and the Pacific Islands Health Officers Association (PIHOA). The UOG has been designated as the office for the program.

The Department of Health and Human Services awarded \$867K in funding to UOG for the first year of a three-year

grant that supports the improvement of individual and community health throughout Micronesia by recruiting and training additional health care professionals.

According to Maria Salomon, Director of Nursing at the University of Guam and Guam/Micronesia AHEC program office director, Area Health Education Centers will be established in Guam, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia.

The goal of the Guam/Micronesia AHEC is to improve the health of the underserved through collaborative regional training initiatives across the Micronesian region. This area has some of the highest health workforce shortage

ratings and the greatest health and education disparities in the US. The Guam/Micronesia Area Health Education Center emphasizes community-based interisland training for healthcare providers and students while enhancing health career education and recruitment from elementary to community college levels. The grant objectives include: 1.) Improve the diversity of the health professions workforce by mentoring and providing health career activities for over 1,200 underrepresented minority students per year. 2.) Improve the distribution of the health care workforce in Micronesia by providing local/on-island interdisciplinary

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