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Guam Community College Awarded \$250,000 Grant from the U.S. Department of State

- **NEWS**
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Thirty women entrepreneurs from 25 Pacific Island Countries (PIC) will travel to Guam in April of 2025 for a one-week in-person training session at Guam Community College (GCC) as part of a 12-month train-the-trainer program funded by a \$250,000 grant from the U.S. Department of State (DOS). The Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) is a program under the auspices of the Young Pacific Leaders (YPL) managed by the U.S. Embassy, New Zealand.

As AWE enters its sixth iteration this year, the GCC Office of Continuing Education and Workforce Development (CEWD) will coordinate the training and host the in-person session. The women will come from as far away as Rapa Nui and across the Micronesia, Polynesian, and Melanesian islands. Dr. Okada, President and CEO of GCC, said she is proud to have the aspiring women entrepreneurs come to Guam and have a chance to see how our business community serves Guam and the rest of the North Pacific.

During the five-day April 2025 conference in Guam, participants will present their business plans and successes and discuss issues with their peers and community leaders. They will also have an opportunity to meet with the Guam Women's Chamber of Commerce, business leaders, and political leaders, sharing their accomplishments and challenges. Participants will also tour retail, manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, retail, and logistics businesses that make Guam a hub for

business in the Pacific.

The Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) gives enterprising women the knowledge, networks, and access they need to launch and scale successful businesses. AWE uses a hybrid model that combines the online training platform “DreamBuilder” (developed through a partnership between Arizona State University’s Thunderbird School of Global Management and the Freeport-McMoRan Foundation) with in-person mentoring and facilitation. Through AWE, participants learn core business skills and then gather as a group to discuss the material with their facilitators and AWE alumni and adapt it to their local context.

The Academy will be conducted primarily through weekly online meetings. Regional U.S. Embassies and the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) will assist in the recruitment process for PICs. Guam Community College will lead the effort to identify participants from the U.S. Territories, the CNMI, and Hawaii.

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