



**Be Engaged.
Be Empowered.**

E² SYMPOSIUM

Engagement + Empowerment: E2 Equals Diversity and Inclusion

**Quality of Life Issues and Opportunities of
Underserved Communities on Guam and Micronesia**

January 24, 2020 | GCC Multipurpose Auditorium

Program



President's Message



Hafa adai and welcome to GCC's *Engagement + Empowerment: E2 = Diversity and Inclusion* Symposium. We are especially proud to host this event as it reflects the culture of inclusion and engagement we work hard to cultivate on our campus and with our community partners.

The E2 Symposium is timely and significant to the discussion happening throughout our community. Our goal is to identify ways to strengthen our island and region. Every member of our community adds value to the quality of our lives, yet each of us must be given the opportunity to contribute meaningfully.

The guest speakers, panel discussions and personal testimonials will provide insight into the challenges many in our community still face. We will begin to explore the still unrealized potential within our region. Creating opportunities for everyone who calls Guam and Micronesia home is pivotal to the health and stability of our community. Through open dialogue we can begin to acknowledge the barriers to inclusion that many still face and resolve to remove them.

As island communities, we pride ourselves in our diversity and sense of inclusion. Through the E2 Symposium we have the opportunity to affirm our commitment to these ideals through the engagement and empowerment of those in our community who continue to feel marginalized.

Our discussion tracks - Engagement and Empowerment through Science, through Non-Profit Organizations and through Education & Training - provide a path forward for our discussions, but are just the start.

We are grateful for the participation of Mr. John Cruickshank, the National Science Foundation's Staff Associate for Policy in the Division of Research on Learning (DRL). John has been a long-time advocate for Guam, the Marianas and Micronesia as a whole. His insight and experience will enrich our discussion and help guide our outcomes. Thank you to all who are participating today. We cannot underscore your value to this discussion.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary A.Y. Okada".

Mary A.Y. Okada, Ed.D
President
Guam Community College

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM



7:00 – 8:30 AM	Continental Breakfast & Registration
8:31 – 8:44 AM	Special Message by Lt. Governor Joshua Tenorio First Openly Gay Elected Lt. Governor in the United States
8:45 – 9:00 AM	Welcoming Remarks and Introduction of the Keynote Speaker by Dr. Mary Okada, GCC President
9:01- 10:30 AM	LGBTQ + STEM in Micronesia Keynote Address by John S. Cruickshank Senior Federal Official National Science Foundation (NSF)
10:31 – 10:45 AM	Break
10:46 AM – 12:29 PM	Varied Voices: Personal testimonials from multi-sectoral representatives <i>To be facilitated by GCC Human Services students: Gabrielle Cruz, Brianna Dueñas, Rayann Fernandez</i>
	FEATURED GUEST PANELISTS Benjamin J. Cruz, Guam Public Auditor (former Chief Justice of the Guam Supreme Court and former Speaker of the Guam Legislature) Lasia Casil, Executive Director Hagatña Restoration & Redevelopment Authority, Government of Guam Raymond Shinohara, Founder Green Valor, Veteran Advocate and Peer Support Specialist Johnsiny Relich, Chuukese Youth Member Island Girl Power Teresa “Chech” Perez Human Services Graduate, GCC
12:30 – 1:30 PM	Introduction of Chefs and Culinary students Asian Fusion Lunch Buffet (catered by GCC Culinary students)
1:30 – 1:35 PM	Session Changeover (Transition time)
1:36 – 3:09 PM	Track Presentations (Science, Non-profit organizations, Education/Training) <i>Breakout Groups: Please proceed to assigned rooms in E Bldg., and the Learning Resource Center (LRC) for the poster presentations.</i>
3:10 – 3:15 PM	Session Changeover; proceed to the MPA
3:15 PM	E2 Panel (with Keynote Speaker): Q & A <i>How do varied voices in the community and the region promote empowerment and engagement of underserved groups?</i> <i>To be facilitated by Joachim Peter Roberto</i>
4:30 PM	A Call to Action Text written by John de la Rosa Asst. Director, Communications & Promotions Office Guam Community College

Track Presentations & Room Assignments



1:36 – 3:09 PM

Track 1: Science

1a. **Why does the National Science Foundation invest in STEM Education?**

John S. Cruickshank

This presentation by senior Federal official John Cruickshank highlights the funding areas and opportunities supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF). Specifically, it covers the programs and initiatives in the Directorate for Education and Human Resources (HER) under NSF.

Bldg. E, Room E203

1b. **Poster presentations: UOG student research in coastal and marine sciences**

University of Guam students: *Laura Gombar, Kelsie Ebeling-Whited, Nicole Imamura, Melissa Gabriel, Frank Roberto, Ahmiya Cacapit, Kireon Rios, Karim Primov, Ka'ohinani Kawahigashi, Dareon Rios*

University of Guam (UOG) undergraduate and graduate students from the Guam Established Programs to Stimulate Competitive Research (Guam EPSCoR) and the National Science Foundation's Inclusion Across the Nation of Communities of Learners of Underrepresented Discoverers in Engineering and Science (NSF INCLUDES) will conduct poster presentations on their local STEM research and outcomes. Their topics include coral genetics, aquaculture, watershed restoration and management, biorepository data, and oceanographic research. The students' projects were supported by UOG's Center for Island Sustainability, Marine Laboratory, and Sea Grant Program.

*These ten (10) poster presentations are displayed at the atrium of the **GCC Learning Resource Center (LRC)**. Please proceed to the LRC to engage the students in discussion regarding their respective research projects.*

Track 2: Non Profit Organizations

2a. **Cultural Empowerment Model Addressing Substance Abuse Among LGBTQ Youth**

Aurea Tagudin, GALA Intern

Flo Mesa, GALA Administrative Project Assistant

This session focuses on GALA's Storytelling for Empowerment (SFE) Program, a nationally developed evidence based curriculum addressing substance abuse among youth. GALA's SFE program has been culturally adapted for LGBTQ youth and their friends. Session participants will experience an actual lesson from the curriculum. Time will also be devoted to specific intervention strategies via cultural empowerment/peer education model employed in addressing underserved LGBTQ communities on Guam.

Bldg. E, Room 204

- 2b. **Diverse Cultures Thriving Together**
Norita CHarfauros, Mañe'lu Program Manager
Action Aiashy, Community Outreach Coordinator

Mañe'lu's (formerly Big Brothers, Big Sisters Guam) team will discuss the different ways the organization connects and engages with diverse families through a multitude of mobile services brought to underserved communities. The team will also highlight the importance of partnerships with community members, government agencies and other nonprofit organizations in order to create enduring and effective programs. The session will end with an interactive presentation of the day-to-day activities used to engage youth.

Bldg. E, Room 205

Track 3: Education/Training

- 3a. **Viewpoints: Panel**
GCC students: *Gabrielle Cruz, Marinel Dolor, Brianna Dueñas, Alyssa Sutherland, Teresa Unsiog*

As a capstone project, the students of *HM 150* (Human Diversity) viewed a selection of video documentaries of their choice about the diverse life experiences of persons in the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) community. As an exercise in thoughtful reflection, students will present courageous stories and learning outcomes about human diversity through the lens of gender and sexual orientation. The panel concludes with a summative collection of *Viewpoints* about the similarities and differences of their documentaries, as well as their recommendations in promoting inclusion and diversity.

Bldg. E, Room 207

- 3b. **Viewpoints: Poster Presentation**
GCC students: *Christy Cruz, Gabrielle Cruz, Brianna Duenas, Rayann Fernandez, Elijah Quidachay, Tiara Salas*

This is a poster rendering of the above panel discussion. *This poster presentation is displayed at the foyer of the E Building, GCC. Students will be available to answer your questions about their capstone project after the panel presentation.*

These poster presentations are displayed at the atrium of the GCC Learning Resource Center (LRC). Please proceed to the LRC to engage the students in discussion regarding their various research projects.

1. Laura Alexandria Gombar: NSF INCLUDES fellowship (Mentor: Else Demeulenaere)

Title: Lina'la' ta'lo: The Restoration of Guam's Southern Watersheds Through Observation of Native Savanna Plant Phenology

Badlands are a type of terrain that is very common in southern Guam. These areas consist of clay and loose sediment that are often heavily eroded due to human activities or harsh weather conditions. Loose sediment that is a result of erosion in these areas is washed down to our oceans where coral reefs will be negatively impacted. Common ways to characterize badlands areas include minimal vegetation and extensive, obvious erosion. In this project, data consisting of certain aspects of phenology such as budding, flowering and immaturity/maturity of fruits have been compared between three samples of eight species (twenty-four total) of native savanna plants in two separate communities, Cotal and Cetti bay area. Some of the plant species previously mentioned include *Decaspermum fruticosum*, *Dimeria chloridiformis*, *Glochidion marianum*, *Gseniostoma micranthum*, *Melastoma marianum*, *Myrtella bennigsenianna*, *Rhynchospora rubra*, and *Timonius nitidus*. These plants will be monitored for a full year to determine the phenology factors and the months in which they occur. The outcomes have informed us of the optimal time for seed harvesting from each species for future restoration projects and watershed management.

2. Kelsie Ebeling-Whited

Title: Mating success of the six-bar wrasse (*Thalassoma hardwicke*, Labridae) utilizing two mating strategies

Thalassoma hardwicke is a widespread reef fish species distributed throughout much of the tropical Indo-West Pacific region. This species utilizes two spawning strategies: paired and group spawning. The former is used by sex-changed terminal-phase (TP) males who establish temporary courtship territories within a lek-like system and attempt to court multiple females in succession. The latter is used by initial-phase (IP) males and females that assemble around a specific site at a specific time and then engage in multiple bouts of group spawning. Both systems operate simultaneously at a resident spawning aggregation site found on Finger Reef, Apra Harbor, Guam. Four questions arise: 1) which spawning type will be most successful? 2) How does the density of *T. hardwicke* affect mating system choice and spawning success rates? 3) Are the spawning rates of *T. hardwicke* affected by lunar cycles and seasons? 4) Do egg predator abundances impact the success rates of the two spawning types? Thus far, I have collected data for 867 group and 32 paired spawning events. Preliminary analysis indicates 96% of group spawns were successful compared to 93% successful pair spawns. Egg predation occurred in 55% of group spawn events and only 19% of pair spawns. Answers to these questions will provide an understanding of the dynamics of spawning aggregations formed by common and easily accessible fish species such as *T. hardwicke* and can be important for use in developing model systems that examine the behavior and ecology of reef fish species.

3. Co-Authors: **Nicole R. Imamura;**
Andrea L. Blas, Ph.D. University of Guam B.S. in Biology;
Assistant Professor, Plant Pathology

Title: Evaluating the Presence of *Arbuscular Mycorrhizal Fungi* to Mitigate Habitat Restoration of Badlands

Climate change has posed many harmful ecological effects on the environment today, most especially with the growing presence of Badlands. Badlands, which are stripped of many vital nutrients, are characterized by dry terrain composition and poor soil quality. Almost all badlands lack the suitability to support different forms of life, including much of the native flora and fauna. This project was designed to investigate a potential solution for Badland Restoration by analyzing the varied levels of *Arbuscular Mycorrhizal Fungi* (AMF) from the native Badlands of southern Guam. Mycorrhizal fungi are best known for their unique ecological symbioses with most terrestrial plants. Specifically, in AMF, small arbuscules form to assist in the uptake of important nutrients, which help to enhance the growth and reproduction of its host plant. For this project, root and soil samples were collected from two research sites: Inarajan and Lower Ija. From each site, we marked two different transects and collected soil, grass, and fern root samples from four different zones. Data collected were: AMF spore density in rhizosphere soil and percent root colonization, i.e., AMF symbioses in plant roots. Based on current findings, AMF symbioses and spores are least common in Badland soil and highest in areas further away from the Badland soil. From this data, future applications involving soil inocula of AMF, can be implemented to help establish indigenous plants and rehabilitate the Badlands in Guam.

4. **Melissa Gabriel**

Title: Gene Expression of Massive *Porites* Along a Sediment Gradient

Sedimentation is well documented to be deleterious to coral reefs due to a multitude of physiological and ecological processes. However, some reef-building coral taxa such as massive *Porites* continue to dominate these environments. To better understand the mechanisms of coral homeostasis and stress response, an RNA-Seq approach was used to examine gene expression patterns of massive *Porites* between low and high sedimentation through the dry and wet season; and across microhabitats of a natural sediment gradient in Fouha Bay, Guam. Additionally, environmental parameters (sediment, salinity, temperature, illuminance) are being investigated to examine variation between sites and their effect on gene expression patterns. The results of this study will provide insight of molecular responses to seasonal and environmental variation which can be further used to create biomarker tools for detection of sub-lethal levels of stress.

5. Frank Camacho Roberto

Title: *Gineftao*: the Use of Modern Aquaculture Techniques to Enhance the Ancient CHamoru Tradition of Harvesting *Mañāhak* (juvenile *Siganus spinus*)

CHamoru – the indigenous people of Guam – have a practice called *Gineftao* which can be translated into English as “the act of giving back”. For thousands of years, CHamoru fishermen have harvested newly-recruited rabbitfish (*mañāhak*) for sustenance as a cultural delicacy. With this substantial protein source as a major part of our spring diet, sustaining these fish have obvious cultural and socio-economic benefits for the people of Guam. The availability of this resource allows the passing down of a traditional fishing technique for future generations. Unfortunately, like many other reef fish, annual catches of rabbitfish have been on the decline. With growing human populations, this does not bode well for such cultural practices. To address this problem, this study will adapt modern aquaculture techniques for the scribbled rabbitfish (*Siganus spinus*) to provide information in terms of exploring different diet compositions and optimizing growth rates of this species in captivity as a means to reverse the negative impacts of overfishing by enhancing wild fish stocks through restocking. Through these techniques we can exercise our indigenous practice of *Gineftao* and give back to the ocean and maintain what she has provided us for thousands of years.

6. Ahmiya Cacapit

Title: Fish Species Assemblage Across the Longitudinal Gradient of Neotropical Streams in the Las Cruces Biological Station, Costa Rica.

Because freshwater fish are sensitive and adaptive to stressors from their environment, their assemblages can illustrate the effects of climate change through careful monitoring of their distributions and community composition in stream microhabitats. Fish biodiversity is exceptionally high in the neotropics, but little is known about fish communities in such regions.

Fish community surveys were conducted within streams in the Las Cruces Biological Station from 1000-1400 m above sea level (masl). Twenty-six sites of differing habitat type (e.g., pools and riffles) were sampled using a seining method and minnow traps placed overnight, baited with pet food. Each fish captured was identified to species. Four species of fish were collected: *Brachyraphis terrabensis*, *Bryconamericus terrabensis*, *Rhamdialaticaudi*, and *Trichomycterus striatus*. The most common species across all habitat types were *Bry. terrabensis* and *Bra. terrabensis* (6 and 5 mean individuals/sampling site, respectively). Correlation matrices using PAST 3.25 were completed to test for relationships between diversity (Shannon-Weiner Index), fish density, and site characteristics, including elevation and discharge. Results indicate possible shifts that these populations are undergoing or undersampling; in either case, these results emphasize the need for continued monitoring of neotropical fish distributions. Regular and expanded monitoring of fish community composition in neotropical streams is vital to identify distribution shifts that will likely occur due to climate change related stressors.

7. Kireon Rios

Title: Barcoding and Phylogenetic Analyses of Reef-Building *Porites* Coral From Guam

Coral reefs are the most diverse ecosystems on the planet based on the abundance and diversity of that phyla and other higher taxa. However, it is still very difficult to assess the abundance of lower taxa, particularly at the species level. This is of particular significance since proper species identification is the basis for any type of study, quantification or description of nature. Morphological species identification is complicated by inconspicuous cryptic species and phenotypic plasticity can blur species boundaries. This is most prominently true for the foundational taxa of coral reefs as well, reef-building scleractinian corals. One potential remedy are genetic markers than can be used to unequivocally identify cryptic species and assess species boundaries.

Here, we present one such approach for a particularly important and challenging group of reef-building corals. *Porites* corals are the main reef-builders of many coral reefs in the Indo-Pacific due to their general abundance and the massive growth forms of some *Porites* species. The current number of *Porites* species is controversial, and several common species can only be distinguished based on detailed microstructure analyses by taxonomic experts. We therefore test a genetic barcoding approach to identify the most suitable genetic marker to facilitate species differentiation and provide unambiguous identification - for example for the *Porites* collection in the new UOG Biorepository. In addition, this is useful and timely information for ongoing experimental, ecological and physiological research at the UOG Marine Lab and elsewhere. We combine this barcode developing work with a first phylogenetic analyses of Guam's *Porites* species, which we will develop further in the near future.

8. Karim Primov

Title: The Population Genetic Structure of the reef-building coral *Porites lobata* on Guam

Porites lobata is one of the most widespread coral species in the Indo-Pacific and a major reef-builder on Guam. *Porites lobata* is found in a variety of habitats, including river deltas and adjacent fore-reefs. River deltas provide an unusual environment for corals to survive in since they receive highly turbid and low-salinity river discharge. This discharge has the potential to drive *P. lobata* population differentiation. In this study, we will determine whether population structure exists between *P. lobata*, both around Guam and between river deltas and fore reefs. We will also determine whether levels of genetic diversity in *P. lobata* differ between habitat types. A next-generation Illumina sequencing approach will be employed to generate genomic data using a double-digest RAD-Seq protocol. These data will also aid in identifying potential signatures of adaptation in *P. lobata* to river discharge. This study will help characterize the genetic diversity and extent of environmental adaptations of *Porites lobata* on Guam.

9. **Ka’ohinani Kawahigashi**

Title: Reproductive behavior of *Gomphosus varius* (Labridae) in relation to current patterns at a spawning aggregation site: Implications for larval dispersal

Accurate predictions of fish spawning pattern and larvae dispersal are both crucial for maintaining sustainable fisheries and stable fish populations. The bird wrasse, *Gomphosus varius*, is a tropical reef fish that forms residential spawning aggregations at specific sites daily if local population densities are relatively high. In this study, I propose to use *G. varius* as a model species for analyzing some of the ecological characteristics of reef fish spawning aggregations. Finger Reef, Apra Harbor, Guam is a well-known aggregation site for multiple fish species, including *G. varius*, that utilizes a lek-like mating system while aggregating and a harem-like mating system when not. The objectives of this study are to (1) understand the social and territorial dynamics of this wrasse’s lek-like mating system, (2) determine the optimal oceanographic and environmental conditions at a given site that promote spawning at a spawning aggregation site, and (3) determine the dispersal patterns of pelagic *G. varius* eggs at this site. Field observations have been conducted at Finger Reef since October 2018 to determine if *G. varius* spawning patterns correlate with tidal, current, lunar and seasonality patterns, mating territory defense, territory location within the aggregation site, and social interactions. Males have been marked using colored visible implant elastomer tags to identify individuals and determine the time each allocates to controlling and defending its mating territory in order to estimate costs relative to spawning success. Observations of mating territory defense, courtship and spawning success will provide insights towards understanding the structure and function of this spawning aggregation. Additionally, dye and drifter release experiments will determine if pelagic eggs are largely retained or dispersed from the site at peak spawning times.

10. Authors: **Dareon Rios & David Combosch**

Title: The Population Genetic Structure of *Acropora pulchra* in Guam

Staghorn *Acropora* corals are ecologically important as locally dominant reef-builders, and habitat structurers for fishes and invertebrates. However, many staghorn species are particularly susceptible to coral bleaching, caused by warming sea surface temperature. In Guam, staghorn *Acropora* suffered an estimated 50% loss, spanning a three-year period marked by multiple bleaching events (2013-2015).

In this study, we determine the presence of population structure of *Acropora pulchra* in Guam. We analyze genome-wide ddRAD sequence data of 150 *A. pulchra* samples from five remaining staghorn populations around Guam. Standard population genetic analyses are used to determine levels of genetic and genotypic diversity, population structure, and gene flow. We also assess signatures of selection and local adaptations in *A. pulchra* populations around Guam, by comparing multiple F_{ST} outlier approaches.

Presently, there is no peer-reviewed population genetic data for any coral species in Guam, which stresses the importance of this study. To better inform conservation and restoration management, the resulting population genetic data will be used to determine populations of high conservation priority. In addition, resulting genetic data will inform the operation of the University of Guam’s coral nursery. Efforts there focus on growing and transplanting genetically diverse and resilient staghorn fragments to restore populations around Guam. This study facilitates proper conservation and restoration of *A. pulchra*, by providing a detailed understanding of its basic population genetic framework, structure and dynamics.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER & PANELISTS: Capsule biographies



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John S. Cruickshank

Keynote Speaker

John S. Cruickshank is the Staff Associate for Policy in the Division of Research on Learning (DRL) and the Independent Research and Development (IR/D) Expert and Conflict of Interest (COI) Official in the Directorate for Education and Human Resources (EHR) under the National Science Foundation (NSF). John's responsibilities include policy, grant, and conflict management of educational research programs. He advises the Division and Directorate leadership about the portfolio of awards and investments and compliance with NSF and Federal policies.

John leads Micronesia and South Pacific outreach, building capacity and broadening participation in Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau. In his Pacific work John has briefed high-level leaders including Heads of State, Governors, Ambassadors, and Ministers and has been interviewed on TV, in the newspapers, and on the radio.

John earned his B.A. Cum Laude in Political Science from the State University of New York at Purchase.

John has been with the Federal Government and NSF since 1986 and in his more than three decades of public service has received many awards and honors. In 2019 he was awarded Honorary Resident and Mayoral Commendation by the Mayors' Council of Guam for his contributions to the people of Guam. In 2012 he delivered the Commencement Address at Guam Community College. In 2011 he was the recipient of the NSF Director's Award for Superior Accomplishment for his innovative outreach model to the U.S.-affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPI) Region. In 2009 the Guam Legislature awarded him a Resolution for his Federal advocacy of Guam and Micronesia. In 2004 and 1996 he received the Director's Award for Excellence for grant management.

Benjamin Joseph "BJ" Franquez Cruz

Benjamin J.(BJ)F. Cruz has been an advocate for the underserved and a catalyst of progress for Guam for more than three decades. His list of notable accomplishments includes being the youngest appointed Judge in the Superior Court of Guam, Chief Justice of the Guam Supreme Court and Speaker of the Guam Legislature. In September 2018 he became only the second person to serve as the elected Public Auditor of Guam, a position he currently holds.

As a Juvenile and Family court judge, he fought for the establishment of services for juvenile offenders and troubled youth. He also issued his landmark decision ordering the implementation of the Chamorro Land Trust Act, providing native inhabitants with the opportunity to own homes on lands previously owned by the government of Guam.

In 1985, Judge BJ Cruz was the feature interview for Latte Magazine, a Guam lifestyle publication, where he openly discussed his longtime homosexual relationship. In 1997, he was featured in an article in *The Advocate* titled “Cruz Control: Newly Appointed Guam Supreme Court Justice Benjamin Cruz May Be the Nation’s Highest Ranking Gay Judge.”

As a Senator in 2009, BJ introduced the Same-Sex Civil Union legislation, helping to bring the discussion to the forefront of public debate. Although he has been met by opposition from religious leaders and other special interests on island, he has held true to his convictions, serving as a beacon of hope for many in Guam’s LGBTQ+ community that acceptance and inclusion were possible.

Aside from his advocacy for the rights of the LGBTQ+ community, BJ Cruz has an active advocate for CHamoru rights, the preservation of the CHamoru culture, and was appointed by U.S. Secretary of the Interior Gayle Norton to serve as one of five members of the Guam War Claims Review Commission.

Lasia Casil

Lasia Casil is a CHamoru transgender woman from southern Guam. She is a jewelry designer and entrepreneur, an LGBTQ and environmental activist and the first transwoman to be appointed to the Executive Branch serving as the Executive Director of the Hagåtña Restoration and Redevelopment Authority (HRRA) in the Leon Guerrero/ Tenorio administration. She is the founder and Chairwoman of Guam Pride, an annual event to raise awareness for LGBTQ rights and equality and, working closely with the Guam Visitors Bureau, to promote Guam as a safe place for LGBTQ travelers to visit. She is also the founder and Chairwoman of Save Southern Guam, a grass-roots non-profit organization advocating for the protection of the seashore and coastal beauty of southern Guam.

Fleeing persecution and discrimination on Guam in her early 20’s for being a transwoman in society, Lasia spent two decades traveling around the world searching for a safe place to be her authentic self. Her travels brought her to live in Tokyo, London, New York, Los Angeles and Bangkok. She returned to Guam to reconnect with her family and CHamoru roots and to apply her life experiences abroad to advocate for LGBTQ youth and to fight against the irresponsible and destructive overdevelopment of her island home. Her mission as the Executive Director of the HRRA is to restore the capital city of Hagåtña as the crown jewel of Guam and the Marianas as it was prior to its complete destruction in World War II.

Raymond Shinohara

Raymond is the founder of Green Valor, a community-based organization on Guam, addressing issues in the Veteran community. Initially, the organization started as a farming program at the University of Guam. The idea of “Veterans helping Veterans” was a catalyst in addressing systemic problems affecting Veterans on Guam. In realizing that Guam had a real issue of access to care, services and representation, Green Valor took a stand to champion these issues. Since 2015, Raymond and Green Valor have been diligently working with Veterans, addressing post-traumatic stress disorder, suicidal ideations, and homelessness. Outreach and engagements with Veterans and families is offered year-round with the priority of the holidays in addressing suicide in the Veteran community.

As a social worker, Raymond has gone out to Baseco, Philippines in the Tondo area assisting a local church with uplifting the spirits of the homeless children that reside in an area with over 100,000 homeless. He has coordinated three (3) events in 2019 to provide educational media, medical supplies, and food, as well as to make assessments of the issues surrounding the Baseco area to address social disparities.

Raymond earned his Bachelors in Social Work from the University of Guam and expects to receive his Masters in Social Work in May 2020 from the University of Hawai’i at Manoa. He is also a Veteran Affairs Certified Peer Support Specialist. Finally, Raymond is a United States Marine Corps Veteran of eleven (11) years of active duty service.

Johnsiny Relich

Johnsiny Relech is a Chuukese high school senior from the village of Dededo and proud Islander from John F. Kennedy High School. Johnsiny has earned academic honors and is currently fundraising for her senior trip to Japan this April. Additionally, Johnsiny serves as a youth volunteer with Island Girl Power and serves as a youth volunteer at their thrift store in Dededo. Her volunteer efforts also include teaching dance and art, as well as providing encouragement and support for young teenagers regarding various life issues. According to her mentor and Executive Director of Island Girl Power, Juanita Blaz, “For the past 6 years, Johnsiny has been a valuable youth volunteer for Island Girl Power. She is delightful and has excellent customer service and leadership skills.”

Teresa “Chech” Perez

A Guam Community College alumni, Teresa Perez, best known by her peers as “Chech” is a firm believer in the golden rule. She is a proponent of basic human decency and a poster child of the human condition. Her work experience is split between the human services field and the culinary industry, both of which, she’s been doing for the better part of two decades.



E2'S CORE PLANNING TEAM

Dr. R. Ray D. Somera, *Lead*
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Guam Community College

Dr. Tim de la Cruz
Extension Agent III
Cooperative Extension & Outreach
Consumer Family Sciences
University of Guam
& Executive Director
Guam's Alternative Lifestyle Association (GALA)

Joachim Peter Roberto
Associate Dean, TPS
Guam Community College

Acknowledgment

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Assistance and support also provided by:



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