



CNMI Public School System

STUDENTS FIRST

• Accountability • Responsibility • Transparency

July 2023

A SUMMER OF CAREER-CENTERED STUDENT PROGRAMS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EDUCATORS, PERSONNEL



More than a remedial education strategy:
These are initiatives that connect students with their passion

Professional development opportunities for school district personnel

Thank You Inter Successful Sum on Industry-b



*Building Local Capacity
in the Micronesia Area
Outward of a Trend*

CAREER
EXPLORATION
SUMMER
INTERPRO

SAIPAN
COLLEGE

Thank you for

ns, Businesses'

Summer Program based Careers



THE Saipan Chamber of Commerce and the Public School System said their 2023 Career Exploration Internship Program has successfully immersed public school students in several careers on the island.

Sixty students from Saipan, Tinian and Rota have participated in the program, which was launched on June 21 and concluded on Aug. 4. The program has earned the support of several local small, medium, and large business establishments on Saipan.

On July 26, the SCC hosted lunch at the Kensington Hotel in appreciation of the student-interns and the participating local businesses. Each of them was presented with a certificate of participation.

In his remarks, SCC Vice President Dr. Joshua Wise said, "This is a very successful program. Our high school students are able to spend time with actual industries," which will help prepare them for their career choices.

PSS, through its federally funded Career Technical and Education Program, has expanded its high school-based college and career-focused curriculum by partnering with the SCC and other business entities.

In his remarks, Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred B. Ada, said the program is "training remarkable interns who will be the future leaders of this Commonwealth."

He likewise acknowledged the program mentors and industry partners for their "support and guidance" to help prepare the students for future challenges and opportunities.

Also attending the celebration were Board of Education Vice Chairman Herman Atalig, Secretary/Treasurer Gregory Pat. Borja, and Member Maisie B. Tenorio.

The businesses that are participating in the internship program are the AP Group LLC, Bank of Saipan, Coca-Cola Beverage Co., Transpacific International Inc., Marianas Pacific Distributors Inc., Paradise Dental Spa, PHI Pharmacy, Plumeria Steak House, Triple J Enterprises Inc., and Pacifica Insurance.

Also participating are the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., PSS, and the chamber of commerce itself.

SCC Education and Welfare Committee Chair Janice Marie A. Tenorio, who is also IT&E's customer service and government relations manager, said the 2023 Career Exploration Internship Program is "unique and innovative."

"This is history in the making: the SCC and PSS have collaborated — thank you Commissioner [Ada] and all our PSS leaders for approving and agreeing with [the intent of the] program," she said.

Tenorio also praised parents for supporting their children's decision to participate in the program. "Parents, your children will be able to use this experience in the future. [It] will help them decide what they want to do when they grow up," she added.

In addition, Tenorio acknowledged the SCC's Education and Workforce Development Committee members for strongly endorsing the program: Nicole Babauta, Joshua Wise, Eileen Babauta, Velma Palacios, Vickie Izuka, Mercilyn Palec, and Kuan-Hee Han.

Tenorio also praised the chamber's executive director, Kimberly Camacho, for her "initiative... in seeing the needs of the local workforce," and her team: Riley Buenaventura and Tasha Bahillo as well as interns Xinyi "Rain" Ni, Malina Tenorio and Elialynn Castro

Camacho said the main goal of their partnership with PSS is to build local capacity. The program's slogan is "Building Local Capacity One Student at a Time."

She told the 60 interns that they deserve special tokens of gratitude for participating in the program.

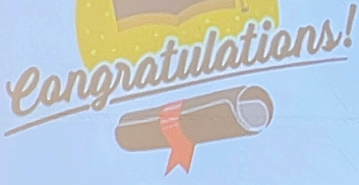
"I am happy to share, on behalf of the program, that you will be awarded stipends...and gas vouchers," she added.



GUAM MARIANAS TRAINING CENTER

School of Allied Health Achieving Dreams through Education

Certified Nursing Assistant



Class of 2023

Congratulations Graduates



The 21 graduates singing the national anthem: Saim Ali (Tinian Jr. Sr. High School), John L. Apit (Marianas High School), Kevin Bao (Mount Carmel School), Elizah Mae Canlas (Marianas High School), Serin Chung (Saipan International School), Jezreel Dylon (MHS), Joann Garcia (SSHS), Freya D. Greathouse (Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr. Sr. High School), Xinwen Jin (MCS), Siena Lazaro (TJSHS), Kyla Charylle S. Macabanti (Northern Marianas College), Jamille Pangelinan (NMC), Kaeli Pathil (MHS), Joshua Revillame (MHS), Guillermina R. San Nicolas (TJSHS), Daryl Santiago (MHS), Kelvin Shrestha (TJSHS), Joana Nicole Signio (NMC), Elizah Mae Valdez (MHS), Bea Carmela Villafuerte (NMC), and Maria K. Cristobal (MHS).

21 Complete Nursing Assistant Program

TWENTY-ONE public and private school students completed a month-long certified nursing assistant or CNA program on Aug. 10 at Saipan World Resort.

The program is an initiative of the Public School System in partnership with the Guam Marianas Training Center under the PSS Career Technical and Education Program, which is funded by the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

The 21 students can now take the CNA licensure examination scheduled for October. If they pass, they can work at the local hospital or any medical facility in the CNMI.

The training they received can also be credited if they pursue a college degree related to the medical field.

The students who completed the training are Saim Ali (Tinian Jr.-Sr. High School), John L. Apit (Marianas High School), Kevin Bao (Mount Carmel School), Elizah Mae Canlas (Marianas High School), Serin Chung (Saipan International School), Jezreel Drilon (MHS), Joann Garcia (Saipan Southern High School), Freya D. Greathouse (Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr.-Sr. High School), Xinwen Jin (MCS), Siena Lazaro (TJSHS), Kyla Charylle S. Macabanti (Northern Marianas College), Jamille Pangelinan (NMC), Kaeli Pathil (MHS), Joshua Revillame (MHS), Guillermina R. San Nicolas (TJSHS), Daryl Santiago (MHS), Kelvin Shrestha (TJSHS), Joana Nicole Signio (NMC), Elizah Mae Valdez (MHS), Bea Carmela Villafuerte (NMC), and Maria K. Cristobal (MHS).

They are the third cohort of the program, which was launched by Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred B. Ada and CTE Program Director Dr. Jessica B. Taylor in the summer of 2020.

Its goal is to create an additional career/workforce pathway for local students.

Joining the students and their families during a ceremony at the Royal Taga Hall of Saipan World Resort were Commissioner Ada,



Dr. Taylor, GMTC President Fe Valencia-Ovalles, GMTC Executive Director Frankie L. Lake, Board of Education Vice Chairman Herman Atalig, RHIJSHS Acting Principal Annette Calvo, and TJSHS Principal Lizbeth Perzinski.

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation was represented by Janet Guerrero, special assistant to the chief executive officer, while the private sector was represented by Saipan Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Kimberly Camacho.

PSS and GMTC officials acknowledged and commended the students' highly trained CNA clinical instructors. They are Maria Lovella Monderin-Aure, Marko Catindig-Malabanan, Jezreel Santo, Clarize Villanueva, Joselita Lazaro, Maria Louise Atrero and Vivian Concepcion.

The tuition-free program began on June 20. Students were also provided with scrub suits, stethoscopes, as well as stipends/allowances and free meals.

Big deal

Speaking on behalf of his peers, Saim Ali said: "Having a certain certification in a specific field of work is quite a big deal for most people. There are so many opportunities being provided by many programs in the CNMI that sometimes I question why one might not take advantage of them."

Ali is the Class of 2023 salutatorian of Tinian Jr.-Sr. High School.

"After graduating from high school, I became interested in healthcare because nurses are in demand in the CNMI. I decided to enroll in the PSS Certified Nursing Assistant Program to gain experience in the medical profession," he said.

"Increasing the number of qualified healthcare professionals in our community will ensure that there is sufficient workforce to address the healthcare demand of our community," Ali added.

Another student, Bea Carmela Villafuerte, said two months ago she "was a bored girl who had just finished her first year of college."

"I did nothing but wake up, eat, and sleep... (and) to be honest with you, the only reason why I joined this program was to keep myself busy. However, now I consider myself fortunate for being able to learn a lot...not only about the things I need to know about this profession but also how to become a better person," Villafuerte said.

She said her nursing assistant program experience "involved more than just executing clinical duties."

"Being present, sympathetic, and a source of consolation is key. We had the honor of seeing the strength of the human spirit in the face of difficulty," Villafuerte added.



The 21 graduates from the PSS-GMTC Nursing Assistant Program proudly show their certificates on August 10 at the Saipan World Resort. They are joined by education and community leaders that include Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred B. Ada, CTE Program Director Dr. Jessica B. Taylor, GMTC President Fe Valencia-Ovalles, GMTC Executive Director Frankie L. Lake, CNMI Board of Education Vice Chairman Herman Atalig, RHI Acting Principal Annette Calvo, and TJSHS Principal Lizbeth Perzinski, CHCC's Special Assistant to the CEO Janet Guerrero and Saipan Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Kimberly Camacho. Clinical instructors and instructors also join the leaders in honoring the students.



The public school students who graduated from the Teacher Academy Program are joined by their mentors. (NMC Photo)

Expanding Education Workforce with Teacher Academy Program

As part of the Northern Marianas College and the CNMI Public School Systems efforts to bolster the workforce and provide quality educators for the local community, NMC's Community Development Institute and School of Education and the CNMI Public School System's Career and Technical Education Program have helped pave the way for numerous high school students looking to become teachers and counselors through its Teacher Academy Program.

The Academy Program is funded by the PSS CTE Program. The PSS-CTE Career Pathways Program, including the Teacher Academy Program, received funding support when the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 was enacted.

Throughout the five-week program, the students received

rigorous core education academic classes with industry-related, project based learning that focuses on career awareness, exploration, preparation, and application. Students were able to expand their knowledge on the fundamentals of teaching and counseling, including special, early childhood and elementary education, and rehabilitation and human services.

Ten cohorts of the Teacher Academy Program received their certificates of completion on July 28, 2023.

The students who participated in the program were Miracle Aldan, Chris Amaro, Keya Das, Danielle Formalejo, Mefi Lorech-Lazaro, Nicole Llaga, Ria Rengiil, Keoni Santos, Keth Soriano, and Hong Zhang. They were paired with student mentors from NMC: Danielle Pineda, Dhalian Salas, Ye Lee Cha, Michael Dasco, Brent

Espineda, Joselito Gomez, Amy Soliman, and Jerilynn Bluu Haruo.

"I saw this program as an opportunity to gain a clear understanding of the field of education and gain insights into my possible future career," Teacher Academy participant and Marianas High School student Keth Soriano said. "I thank NMC and PSS for allowing us to participate in the Teacher Academy Program, which inspired us to pursue our interests, experience hands-on learning environments, show us the importance of education, and by giving us this opportunity to make a positive impact."

"I hope the community sees how important Teacher Academy is for us as much as it is for everyone else, and that other students also have this opportunity to make a difference within the field of education," Soriano added.

NMC School of Education director Roland Merar said that the College has always been at the forefront of empowering the next generation of educators in the Marianas.

"With the teacher academy, we aim to foster a community of dedicated educators who will help shape and inspire young minds," Merar said. "I am confident that these students will follow

through in their academic journey to become teachers and counselors, and they will soon help elevate the standards of education."

PSS Career and Technical education director Dr. Jessica Taylor is thankful for the partnership between the College and PSS.

"NMC and the Public School System have always collaborated well when it comes to helping PSS students prepare for their future careers," Taylor said. "I am grateful for our joint effort, and I wish the best of luck for these students as they continue their studies in being educators."

In his remarks, Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred B. Ada praised both educational institution's strong partnership, and, in particular, for initiating programs that help build local capacity.

The NMC-PSS Teacher Academy Program is now in its third year.

"To our students, your dedication to learning and your openness to the knowledge and experience during this program demonstrate the potential you carry with you..." Dr. Ada said

The ARP 2021 allows for all states and school districts in the nation to "identify and expand career pathways, such as integrated programs and services intended to develop students' core academic, technical, and employability skills; provide them with continuous education and training; and place them in high-demand, high-opportunity jobs."

It is also part of the U.S. Dept. of Education's "raise the bar initiative" to support career pathways and is aimed at increasing and expanding access to high-quality training program, such as NMC-PSS Teacher Academy Program, to help young Americans pursue jobs in today's competitive and in-demand job market and be prepared for future careers.

Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred B. Ada addresses the continued importance of building local capacity during the graduation ceremony of the Teacher Academy Program.



Debuts three student-made short films

Groundbreaking Movie-making Initiative for Public School Students

THREE student-made short films made their public premiere debut on August 11, marking the official debut of the groundbreaking initiative jointly initiated by the Northern Marianas College and the Public School System.

The inaugural initiative called, "Cinema on Saipan: Movie Making in the Marianas" was held at the Regal Cinema Megaplex.

"The Mannequin," is directed by Raja Sevugan. It won the Best Storytelling, Best Cinematography, and Best Editing awards. The film is set on an abandoned mall where three friends go looking for a missing person to claim the missing person's reward.

The short file, "Home's Second Chance" by Shreyne Yang received "The Proa Award." It is a short visual poem of how a home should be taken care of the place we call home," according to Yang.

"Grow to Love" directed by Ulusmar Ogomoro-Uludong is about the "love-hate relationship between three siblings."

The Cinema on Saipan: Filmmaking in the Marianas program is a joint project between Northern Marianas College and the Public School System. PSS is funding the program through the federal funding for the Career and Technical Education Program.





The goal of the pioneering initiative is to introduce public high school students to the art and craft of filmmaking.

It was a three-week program that was created to serve as a creative pathway for students to explore “their passion for storytelling and film production in a nurturing and educational environment,” NMC said.

It is facilitated and coordinated by the NMC’s Community Development Institute (CDI).

“It is our goal to connect our PSS students with every opportunity that they can avail of themselves, explore, and succeed in their chosen career. We want our students to continue to dream big and become successful,” PSS said.

Throughout the program, the public school students immersed themselves in various filmmaking aspects, from pre-production to post-production, principles of filmmaking and storytelling, screenplay writing, and hands-on training on cinematography, among others.

NMC gave awards various awards in various categories: Best Storytelling, which recognizes engaging storytelling, character development, plot structure, and emotional impact; Best Cinematography, which recognizes composition, lighting, camera movement, and overall aesthetics; Best Editing, which recognizes film continuity, pacing, visual coherence, and storytelling enhancement; and the Proa Award, which recognizes the best overall film in terms of storytelling, visual editing, and overall impact.

According to NMC, the instructor for the program is Demetrius Borge, a Film and Media Culture major from Middlebury College. Borge brings a wealth of experience, having produced captivating films for prestigious organizations. As an esteemed instructor, he has taught photography and college cinema courses, inspiring countless students to explore their creative abilities. His work as a producer, director, editor, and cinematographer has earned him numerous awards, and he has

collaborated with renowned clients including Target, Vermont Small Business Development Corporation, Middlebury College, and The Wall Street Journal.





Commissioner on Education Dr. Alfred Ada, left, welcomes the STEP-UP program research students on July 28.

Students Present Summer Research for STEP-UP Program

THE school district has successfully held a symposium for its Short-Term Research Experience for Underrepresented Persons (STEP-UP) Program cohorts, the latest group of public school students that are engaged in research aimed at addressing unique challenges facing the Pacific basin.

The STEP-UP Program has been implemented since early 2000 and the Public School System has been one of the entities/participants in the program, with students in junior high school and senior high school students given the opportunity to experience hands-on biomedical and behavioral research opportunities, as part of their interest in careers involving science and research.

“This is another exciting achievement of our students,” said the PSS Office of Curriculum and Instruction which oversees the program in the CNMI. “This is the culmination of the program’s efforts, (as) we witnessed and heard from our students their summer research projects.”

The local symposium was held on July 28 at the Office of the Commissioner of Education.

PSS-OCI said the four student-cohorts demonstrated “unwavering dedication and ingenuity” with their research projects.

The STEP-UP Program research students The StepAisha Lansangan, Ye Sablan, Skylee Santos and Angelica Mario.



The first project was presented by Saipan Southern High School student Aisha Lansangan, who was mentored by Michael Ogo (NMC CREES - Program Leader for Aquaculture & Natural Resources Program). Their project, "Culturing Caulerpa sp. with Varying Levels of Dissolved Oxygen", showcased remarkable insights into Caulerpa studies and development in the CNMI.

Ye Sablan, also from Saipan Southern High School, in collaboration with her mentor Dr. Zaidul Sarker (Professor, State Program, and Food Science Leader for the Food Science Program), presented an insightful project titled "Correlation Between Acquired Knowledge of the Cognitive Benefits of Green Tea and Self Perceived Cognitive Benefits," captivating the audience with their in-depth research on the perceptions of Green Tea.

Skylee Santos from Marianas High School, mentored by Jesse Deleon Guerrero (NMC CREES - Extension Agent for the Agroforestry and Food & Nutrition Security), presented comprehensive research on "Evaluating Food Cost in Koblerville, Saipan". It addresses a critical aspect of the local community's well-being.

Angelica Mario from Kagman High School, under the mentorship of Dr. Zaidul Sarker, shed light on the health implications of this tropical fruit in the CNMI with her project presentation, "Measuring the Toxicity Levels of Noni (*Morinda Citrifolia*)."

"We are profoundly grateful for the continued support from Northern Marianas College, University

of Hawaii, National Institute of Health as the CNMI STEP-UP program reaches yet another milestone. Through the support of community stakeholders, the program is able to provide invaluable hands-on research opportunities to enthusiastic high school juniors and seniors," adds the Office of Curriculum and Instruction.

"The significance of Pacific STEP-UP cannot be emphasized enough, as it addresses the unique challenges faced by students in the Pacific Basin who aspire to careers involving science and

research. By nurturing the potential of these bright young minds, we are fostering a future generation of diverse scientists equipped to make a positive impact on society," it added.

Following the successful symposium, the four students will be participating in the national symposium at the prestigious National Institute of Health, where they will present their final findings to a wider audience. This will be in Bethesda, Maryland.

The PSS-OCI expressed its appreciation to several individuals for their continued support to the program. They include Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred Ada, Interim Dean of NMC CREES, Patricia Coleman, STEP-UP Program Director, Dr. George Hui, STEP-UP Program Coordinator, Aneesa Golshan, Director of STEP-UP / National Institute of Health NIDDK Dr. Robert Rivers, PSS Senior Director for Curriculum & Instruction Jackie Quitugua, and PSS Science Program Manager Asapmar Ogumoro.

PSS Breaks Ground on New Garapan Elementary School Cafeteria

PUBLIC education officials and schoolchildren led the official groundbreaking for the \$4.1 million Garapan Elementary School cafeteria on July 25.

The cost of the federally funded project includes the design, planning and construction of a single-story, concrete, air-conditioned facility with a large kitchen and an office. The contractor is HBR International.

It will be similar to the cafeterias of Marianas High School and Koblerville Elementary School.

Board of Education Chairman Antonio L. Borja said the groundbreaking is a “testament to the power of collaboration, dedication, and an unwavering commitment to the well-being of our students.”

Planning for the new GES cafeteria began in 2022.

“Countless dedicated individuals worked tirelessly to ensure that every aspect of this cafeteria is designed with the utmost care and attention to detail,” Borja said.

Joining him at the groundbreaking ceremony were BOE Vice Chairman Herman Atalig, Secretary/Treasurer Gregory Pat Borja, Member Maisie B. Tenorio, and Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred B. Ada.

The new cafeteria will be a spacious and conducive facility that will support student learning, Ada said.

The soon-to-be-constructed Garapan Elementary School cafeteria broke ground on July 25. GES students led in the ceremony and were joined by Board of Education Chairman Antonio L. Borja, Vice Chairman Herman Atalig, Secretary/Treasurer Gregory Pat Borja, BOE Member Maisie B. Tenorio, Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred B. Ada, Associate Commissioner for Administrative Services Eric Magofna, PSS-CNP Director Dale Roberts, PSS-FDM Interim Director Martha Kintol, GES Principal Derwin Johnson, GES Vice Principal Jacklyn Quitugua, HBR International Managing Director John Saludez, and HBR Construction Manager Sonya P. Dancoe.



BOE Chairman Antonio L. Borja explains the importance of the new GES cafeteria, with the new rendering and design behind him.





Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred B. Ada addresses public education stakeholders as GES Principal Derwin Johnson, FDM Interim Director Martha Kintol, and CNP Director Dale Roberts look on.

"The fact that this project is 100% federally funded speaks volumes about the federal government's belief in the importance of providing our students with a conducive space for their nourishment and overall development," he added.

He said the new cafeteria "will be a hub of nourishment for both the body and mind, fostering friendships, learning, and growth."

Ada at the same time expressed appreciation for the work of Associate Commissioner for Administrative Services Eric Magofna, PSS-Child Nutrition Program Director Dale Roberts, Facilities Development and Management Interim Director Martha Kintol, Garapan Elementary School Principal Derwin Johnson, and Vice Principal Jacklyn Quitugua, among other education officials.

The construction of the new GES cafeteria will be completed by June 2024, according to John Saludez, managing director of HBR International.

He said, "Hearing the commissioner talk about the usefulness of the MHS and KES cafeterias inspired us at HBR International to continue our work with the islands' education stakeholders and make this project happen. This is for the community, and the children."

Construction manager Sonya P. Dancoe, PE, for her part, said: "We want to assure everyone that we will do this in the safest possible way. We will work together as a team, and this will be done as soon as possible so we can all enjoy it."



School District Boost Investment in Professional Development, Training

PSS LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE 2023

The four-day Public School System's 2023 Leadership Institute began on July 31 at the Crowne Plaza-Saipan and participated by public education leaders led by Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred B. Ada, and the school district's PSS key management, program directors and managers, school administrators, and educators under the PSS Aspiring Leaders Program. The institute is being facilitated by Dr. Kent A. David consulting director for learning services and innovation of the global education think-tank Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning.



With long-term goal of supporting career growth of education professionals, school district focuses role on increased student learning

Investment in Professional Training of Personnel



THE Public School System continues to invest in professional development initiatives, as part of its long-term goal of supporting the career growth and development of its personnel, and how their role impacts student learning.

Throughout the summer months, various professional development, training, and a leadership institute was held.

The series of activities are part of a federally funded development program initiatives that engages the school district's program directors and managers, school administrators, classroom teachers and central office personnel. Federal grants funds various public education personnel initiatives that support student learning.

Close to 500 PSS personnel participated in the various summer training and programs that took place in various locations on Saipan. This is the largest this year in terms of participation that a professional education and career growth activities was held by PSS.

This has been implemented for many years now as an integral tool for supporting and improving PSS employees proficiency and performance, and the overall climate of the school district, Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred B. Ada said.

'After-action'

The Comprehensive Center Network works with the not-for-profit Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL)

in assisting the strategic planning needs, among others, of PSS.

From July 17 to July 20, education leaders gathered for the annual “CNMI After Action Review and Strategic Performance Planning”.

The primary lead of these intensive training are the PSS Federal Program’s Office, Office of Accountability, Research and Evaluation, Office of Curriculum and Instruction, and Office of Student Support Services.

This was held at the Pacific Islands Club.

The CC Network-PREL has sent a technical support team composed of Dr. Allison Layland and Lynette Villagomez.

Every year, the Comprehensive Center-PREL met with school districts in the region to work on various education rigors and needs. PSS belongs to the Region 18 group, which includes Guam, Republic of Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia. The R19CC serves American Samoa, Hawaii, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

For this year, the after-action outcome for the PSS is to have an “updated strategic plan for the next two school years based on current performance, progress, and the results” of the completed after action reviews.

Among the participants in the after action review are the Multi-tiered System of Supports created by PSS. This is a “framework that public schools use to give targeted support to struggling



or low-achieving students.” This is supported by PSS’ share of Consolidated Grant.

The other participants include the Strategic Performance Planning, and Goal 5 team and members.”

Chamorro, Carolinian teachers

At Oleai Elementary School, Chamorro and Carolinian Language and Heritage Studies teachers and immersion teachers met from July 31 to August 1.

The two-day professional development was about “Unpacking of Standards-CCLHS and Creating Standardized Unit Lesson Plans by Grade Level”.

The Office of Curriculum and Instruction’s CCLHS Program, led by its director Jonas Barcinas, has worked with the University of Guam for the immersion professional development and work session of all of PSS’ CCLHS and immersion teachers.

UOG’s Dr. Clare Camacho worked with PSS CCLHS teachers in creating a standardized unit lesson plans for all grade levels, from first to fourth quarter.

Other facilitators include long time educator Jesus Elameto, who presented the Carolinian Orthography training, and educator Carmen ‘Nan Mami’ S. Taimanao for Chamorro Orthography.

Two CCLHS’ curriculum writers are also working on their “professional learning communities to develop a K-8 Progressive curriculum for teachers use, adds Director Barcinas.

This is ongoing from August 7 to 19 at Oleai Elementary School.

Leadership Institute

From July 31 to August 4, PSS program directors and managers, school leaders, classroom teachers participated in the “2023 Balanced Leadership Institute” which was facilitated by the education think-tank, Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL).

The public education leaders and advocates participated in a multi-tiered sessions that covered the following: leadership to improve school performance; principal evaluation system part 1 and 2; inspiring and leading change; McREL’s standards-based teacher evaluation-reducing within-school variability

harassment in the workplace, new truancy reporting standard operating procedure, procurement policies, grievance process and employee safety, and digital and media literacy-tech standards.

Joining McREL’s Dr. Kent A. Davis, the other presenters and facilitators include Commissioner of Education Dr. Alfred, PSS Federal Monitor Marian Tudela, Senior Director for Accountability Research and Evaluation Dr. Rizalina Liwag, legal counsel Tiberius Mocanu, Robert Coldeen, Instructional Technology and Distance Education Director Lorraine Catienza, Infrastructure Technology Officer Jesse Tenorio, Human Resources Director Lucretia Deleon Guerrero, Procurement Director Michael Babauta, and Associate Commissioner for Administrative Services Eric Magofna.



National Conference Features CNMI Special Education Program

ON July 25, 2023, Donna Flores, CNMI PSS Special Education Director, joined partners from the PROGRESS Center, University of Guam CEDDERS, and Pacific Parent Information and Training (PTI) Center in a panel presentation during a concurrent session at the 2023 Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Leadership and Project Directors' Conference held in Arlington, Virginia.

The panel presentation, entitled "Rethinking TA: Impact of a Field-Initiated and Partnership Process," highlighted CNMI's partnership between the OSEP-funded national center, the PROGRESS Center, and the regional technical assistance organization, University of Guam CEDDERS, in the development and implementation of a professional learning framework designed for educators on the development and implementation of high-quality educational programming in the CNMI.

The Pacific PTI Center partner also shared the importance of collaboration between the educational system and parents for improving educational results for students with disabilities. The panel shared how partnerships from national and regional technical assistance providers must be flexible in responding to the system's context and needs in building high-quality professional learning for local educators and parents of children with disabilities in order to impact the delivery of services for students with disabilities. CNMI's example featured the development of an IEP Task Force used as a peer-to-peer coaching model to sustain the support to educators who work directly with the students. CNMI's field-initiated and partnership process with PROGRESS Center, in collaboration with University of Guam CEDDERS, has paved the way for other Pacific entities to access PROGRESS Center's resources and support for building entity-specific professional learning. In addition, this sharing of resources reinforces the Pacific's collective commitment to supporting entity-specific and cross-entity learning opportunities for increasing the confidence of educators to design and implement high-quality educational programming for improving outcomes for students with disabilities.





10 Educators join Aspiring Leaders Program

TEN CNMI Public School System Aspiring Leaders Program (ALP) participants are learning the ropes of school leadership by participating in a summer mentoring program with school administrators across the district.

ALP mentees include April Manglona, Joseph Muna, Deana Villagomez, Francine Cruz, Nadia Murphy, Leora Ngirablosch, Doris Marie Castro, Kate Borja, Freddy Salavaria, and Jolene Aguon. These mentees are being mentored by the following school leaders: Lou Connie Manglona, Jonathan Aguon, Benjamin Jones Jr, Le'ah Murphy, and Victorino Borja.

This year's cohort is expected to complete the program requirements in August 2024.

At the end of the mentorship, participants will have garnered 80 hours of mentoring with firsthand experience on processes such as strategic performance management, student support services, curriculum and instruction, accountability systems and evaluation, and school wide program action planning.

ALP participants have committed to a two year rigorous program that entails eight courses on topics such as school finance, education law, instructional supervision, facilitative leadership, school personnel, supervision, and evaluation, instructional technology, and principles of educational leadership.



ALP mentees Kate Borja, Doris Marie Castro, and Leora Ngirablosch involved in strategic performance discussion with school and program leaders Daisy Quitugua, Victorino Borja, and Jonas Barcinas.



ALP mentees Deana Villagomez and Joseph Muna with middle school principal representative James Sablan.



ALP mentee Joseph Muna discussing safe and caring school updates with goal members Melanie Rdiial and Nick Gross.