



PRESS RELEASE

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Obama Foundation Leaders talk sustainability at UOG Virtual Conference Series

In an effort to spark action and inspire hope for a more sustainable future, the University of Guam Virtual Conference Series on Island Sustainability will continue at 9 a.m. (CHST UTC+10) this Friday featuring change-makers from the inaugural cohort of the Leaders: Asia-Pacific Program of the Obama Foundation. Registration for the weekly conference series is available for no charge at www.uog.edu/cis2020.

Four “Obama Leaders” will be featured in the “CIS SEED Talks: Ideas Worth Cultivating” series. Returning for its third straight year, CIS SEED Talks has a similar format to TED Talks, showcasing influential videos from expert speakers on a range of topics.

The CIS SEED Talks series will be moderated by Andrea Park, who leads international programming for the Asia-Pacific region of the Obama Foundation. Obama Leaders scheduled to give SEED Talks are:

- Dr. Renzo Guinto, chief planetary doctor, PH Lab, Philippines
- David Lawrence, principal advisor for international relations, National Youth Development Authority, Papua New Guinea
- Swietenia Puspa Lestari, founder and executive director, Divers Clean Action, Indonesia
- Alice Mahar, founder, The Corner Store Network, Australia and Timor Leste

Maya Soetoro will also be part of the conversation of inspiring change. Soetoro is the co-founder and senior advisor for the Institute for Climate and Peace, Hawaii and serves as a consultant to the Obama Foundation, helping to develop programming in the Asia-Pacific region. Soetoro was previously the director of the Matsunaga Institute

for Peace and Conflict Resolution at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, where, in addition to leading outreach and development initiatives, she also taught Leadership for Social Change, History of Peace Movements, Peace Education, and Conflict Management for Educators. She was awarded a master's degree in secondary education from New York University and a doctorate in multicultural education from the University of Hawai'i.

The Obama Foundation's Leaders: Asia-Pacific Program is a one-year leadership development and community engagement program that seeks to inspire, empower, and connect emerging leaders from across the Asia-Pacific region. The program features a cross-section of 200 emerging civic leaders from 33 nations and territories in the region, representing public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Austin Shelton, director of the UOG Center for Island Sustainability; Cara Flores, co-founder and director of Nihi! Guam; Attorney Julian Aguon, president of Blue Ocean Law; and Sen. Régine Biscoe Lee of the 35th Guam Legislature are members from Guam of the inaugural cohort.

The first three weeks of the virtual conference series have garnered hundreds of participants each week from more than 60 countries, states, and territories. The sessions are available to view on the UOG Tritons YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/UOGTritons>.

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Photo captions:



Maya and Obama

Former President Barack Obama and Maya Soetoro, co-founder and senior advisor for the Institute for Climate and Peace and consultant to the Obama Foundation, share the stage at the Obama Foundation's Leader: Asia-Pacific Program conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in December.

Photo courtesy of the Obama Foundation



Andrea Park

Andrea Park, international programming lead for the Asia Pacific region for the Obama Foundation, speaks before the inaugural cohort of the Obama Foundation's Leaders: Asia Pacific Program in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in December. Park will moderate the "CIS SEED Talks: Ideas Worth Cultivating" series on May 22 at the University of Guam Virtual Conference Series on Island Sustainability.

Photo courtesy of the Obama Foundation



Renzo Guinto

Dr. Renzo Guinto, chief planetary doctor of PH Labs in the Philippines, gives a presentation on solutions for planetary health in the developing world. Guinto will be one of four “Obama Leaders” featured in the “CIS SEED Talks: Ideas Worth Cultivating” series on May 22 at the University of Guam Virtual Conference Series on Island Sustainability.



DiversActionClean4

Swietenia Puspa Lestari, founder and executive director of Divers Clean Action, Indonesia, an organization that focuses on combating marine debris in small islands and coastal areas, will be one of four “Obama Leaders” speaking in the “CIS SEED Talks: Ideas Worth Cultivating” series on May 22 at the University of Guam Virtual Conference Series on Island Sustainability.



David Lawrence

David Lawrence, principal advisor for international relations for the National Youth Development Authority in Papua New Guinea, meets Queen Elizabeth II. Lawrence is one of four “Obama Leaders” who will speak in the “CIS SEED Talks: Ideas Worth Cultivating” series on May 22 at the University of Guam Virtual Conference Series on Island Sustainability.