



PRESS RELEASE

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Inetnon Lalåhen Guåhan presents UOG with grant to develop database of CHamoru language learning resources

Recognizing the need to make instructional resources about the CHamoru language and culture more accessible to the community, Inetnon Lalåhen Guåhan — the Young Men’s League of Guam — presented the University of Guam with a \$25,000 grant on March 3 to develop an online open-access database for such resources.

The multi-phased project will include:

- collecting, organizing, and digitizing CHamoru language and culture learning resources that have been produced over the last 50 years;
- making the materials available by grade level and subject categories in an online database; and
- working with a cadre of CHamoru language instructors to create and edit existing resources that meet the immediate needs of CHamoru language instruction in the Mariana Islands.

The University of Guam will partner with the CHamoru studies divisions of both the Guam Department of Education and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Public School System to gather, archive, and digitize the resources they have created for CHamoru instruction. The university will also seek to partner with other organizations, government agencies, language experts, and educators who produce language and cultural resources that can be included in the database.

“As a non-profit, we have always focused on what can we give to our people,” YMLG President Johnny P. Taitano expressed during the grant presentation. “We’re humbled to be a part of this project.”

YMLG has a long history of supporting the promotion and perpetuation of the CHamoru culture, language heritage, and identity through active engagement with the community and support of other cultural groups and organizations.

In 2019, the YMLG Committee on Cultural Preservation, headed by Carlos T. Laguáña and Wilfred Leon Guerrero, approached Monique Storie, dean of University Libraries at the University of Guam, and Victoria-Lola Leon Guerrero, the managing editor of the UOG Press, with an interest in creating a program that ensures resources that teach the CHamoru language are accessible to educators through a centralized source at the university. Over the last two years, they have worked together to develop this project with the goal of providing accessibility to existing language and cultural resources and preserving the rich cultural knowledge found in them.

The database, which will take about three years to develop, will allow the university and YMLG to actively promote the availability of CHamoru language and cultural resources to the local, regional, and worldwide communities.

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Photo caption:



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(From left) Katrina T. Perez, executive director, University of Guam Endowment Foundation; Victoria-Lola Leon Guerrero, managing editor, UOG Press; Rufina Mendiola, CHamoru studies administrator, Guam Department of Education; Anita Borja Enriquez, senior vice president and provost, UOG; Thomas W. Krise, president, UOG; Carlos T. Laguá'ña, chairman, Committee for Cultural Preservation, Young Men's League of Guam; Wilfred P. Leon Guerrero, co-chairman of YMLG and president emeritus of UOG; Johnny P. Taitano, president, YMLG; Victor T. Paulino, treasurer, YMLG; Jimmy Teria, CHamoru language and culture specialist, GDOE CHamoru Studies Division; and Monique Storie, dean of University Libraries, UOG.

Photo courtesy of University of Guam