



## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Startup Weekend Micronesia produces sustainability-focused business ideas**

Three sustainability-focused business plans came out of the Startup Weekend Micronesia event hosted online from April 31 to May 2 by the University of Guam Entrepreneur Society student organization, UOG's Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and the Pacific Islands Small Business Development Center Network.

With the assistance of Northern Marianas College, the College of Micronesia-FSM, and SBDC centers throughout Micronesia, the weekend-long event engaged a total of 31 participants on eight islands throughout Micronesia with the dream of starting their own business.

Participants pitched their business ideas with a focus on sustainability. The participants then formed teams and built business plans to turn the most feasible ideas into small-business startups. The teams pitched their startups to a panel of judges who determined the winners.

"We encourage all the teams to make their new business plans a reality," said Jeresa Camacho, an officer of the Entrepreneur Society at UOG.

The winning teams were as follows:

**First Place: Vibin' Ridez**

- Concept: Electric bike and scooter sales, rentals, and servicing
- Members: Limuel Francisco Bernal (CNMI), Kevin John De Torres (CNMI), Jessica Estrada (CNMI), Korky Aguon (CNMI), Andrew Duenas (Guam)

**Second Place: Package Express Unlimited**

- Concept: An affordable delivery service for mail and goods throughout Pohnpei
- Members: Terrence Yamada (Pohnpei), Jerick Welbert (Pohnpei), Michael Panuelo (Pohnpei), Abigail Oyardo (Guam), Destini Adkins (CNMI)

**Third Place: Safe Drinking Water**

- Concept: A safe drinking water solution for residents of Kosrae
- Members: Emily O'Steen, Kianalynn M. Sigrah, Sepe T. Tolenna, Tolenna M. Tolenna, Trime S. George, Steve P. George (all from Kosrae)

The winners were awarded a selection of sustainable gifts as well as gift certificates and laptop bags, AirPods Pros, and Yeti products.

The event is associated with Google Techstars Startup Weekend, a program that has been launched in more than 150 countries across the world that teaches aspiring entrepreneurs how to create a real company.

UOG graduate students in the Professional Master of Business Administration program and the Pacific Islands SBDC at UOG first brought the Startup Weekend event model to Guam in 2014, to Saipan in 2016, and to Palau, Chuuk, Kosrae, Yap, and Pohnpei for the first time in 2019.

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**Photo Caption:**



*2021-startup-weekend-kosrae*

The third-place winners of Startup Weekend Micronesia at the Kosrae Small Business Development Center, where they participated in the Micronesia-wide event from April 31 to May 2. Eight islands connected virtually for the event, which was hosted by the University of Guam Entrepreneur Society student organization, UOG's Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and the Pacific Islands Small Business Development Center Network. *(From left) Sepe T. Tolenna, Trime S. George, Emily O'Steen, Kianalynn M. Sigrah, Tolenna M. Tolenna, and Steve P. George.*

The third-place winners of Startup Weekend Micronesia at the Kosrae Small Business Development Center, where they participated in the Micronesia-wide event from April 31 to May 2. *(From left) Sepe T. Tolenna, Trime S. George, Emily O'Steen, Kianalynn M. Sigrah, Tolenna M. Tolenna, and Steve P. George.*





*2021-startup-weekend-kosrae-2*

During the Startup Weekend Micronesia event on April 31, Kosrae participants Sepe T. Tolenna and Tolenna M. Tolenna map a business plan to make safe drinking water accessible for residents of Kosrae.