



# PRESS RELEASE

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**UOG student joins research voyage mapping ocean floor**

University of Guam student Gabriella Piper spent part of the summer on a research voyage that involved mapping part of the ocean floor aboard the exploration vessel Nautilus.

A communication major at UOG, Piper was part of the first group of students and educators from the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Student Experiences Aboard Ships (STEMSEAS) program to participate in research aboard the Nautilus. The National Science Foundation funds the STEMSEAS Program which aims to provide undergraduate college students with research experience aboard research vessels such as the Nautilus.

The trip also gave Piper the experience of being on the 211-foot exploration vessel that is owned and run by the nonprofit Ocean Explorer Trust. The nonprofit's founder, Robert Ballard, is known for having discovered the Titanic shipwreck in 1985.

"When I first applied, I did not expect to get in because of how many people apply to this program every year, so getting the letter of acceptance felt like such a huge accomplishment," Piper said. She found out about the STEMSEAS program in 2022 as an undergraduate student researcher in the University of Guam's National Science Foundation's Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) ([link to: guamepscor.uog.edu](http://guamepscor.uog.edu)) As a student researcher, she attended a science conference in Puerto Rico in October 2022. On the way to the event, she connected with a STEMSEAS alum and then later discussed the program with outreach representatives at the conference.

"It is because of the (Student Research Experience Program) and the individuals within it that I was able to find this opportunity and learn about the different ways in which I can make a meaningful contribution to the STEM community," Piper said.

The research voyage Piper participated in set sail from Honolulu to the Canadian province of British Columbia on June 15, 2023.

UOG Sea Grant biologist Leilani Sablan also participated in a research expedition aboard the Nautilus in 2022. ([url.uog.edu/S4zobW](http://url.uog.edu/S4zobW))

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**Photo caption:**

*2023-deepsea1*

Gabriella Piper, a University of Guam communication major, is seen aboard the ocean research vessel Nautilus in June 2023. The ship set sail from Honolulu to British Columbia, Canada for a 10-day research journey.

*2023-deepsea2*

University of Guam communication major Gabriella Piper is seen with the Nautilus in the background. It set sail from Honolulu to the Canadian province of British Columbia on June 15, 2023.

*Photos courtesy of University of Guam*