



PRESS RELEASE

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Mellon Foundation awards UOG with \$900K to help revitalize CHamoru language and culture

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, based in New York City, recently awarded the University of Guam with a \$900,000 grant to support the creation of a CHamoru Studies Center and other projects to revitalize CHamoru language and culture.

The grant will support efforts to reverse the decline in the number of CHamoru language speakers in Guam from an estimated 34,598 in 1990 to 21,390 based on the 2020 Census.

UOG will also use the grant to support pathways for students attending the Guam Community College and the Northern Marianas College who seek to transfer their course credits towards a Bachelor of Arts in CHamoru Studies at UOG.

“We are immensely grateful to the Mellon Foundation,” said UOG President Anita Borja Enriquez. “The grant validates UOG’s continuous efforts to revitalize, promote, and proliferate CHamoru language and culture and build capacity for educators who aim to specialize in CHamoru studies and research.”

The CHamoru Studies Program and its faculty members Dr. Kisha Borja-Quichocho-Calvo, Dr. Francine Naputi, Dr. Kenneth Gofigan Kuper, and Dr. Mary Therese F. Cruz are the co-principal investigators for the grant.

“This grant comes at a critical time in the journey of our CHamoru language. Now, more than ever, strong, concerted efforts in both the University and our greater community

must continue to sustain Fino' CHamoru to ensure that we produce more fluent and proficient speakers of the language, so that our language continue to thrive," said Borja-Quichocho-Calvo.

This is the first grant from the highly competitive Mellon Foundation that will support the CHamoru Studies program, according to Dr. James Sellmann, Dean of CLASS.

"The Mellon Foundation grant will support the CHamoru Studies program by helping us establish an archive of CHamoru language learning materials and develop the program to prepare students for graduate work in CHamoru studies," said Dr. Sellmann.

Founded in 1969, The Mellon Foundation's programs support exemplary and inspiring institutions of higher education, humanities, the arts, and culture.

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Photo captions:

The Chamoru Studies Program under the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences recently received a \$900,000 grant to help revitalize CHamoru language and culture. The highly competitive grant award stems from the team efforts of, from left, CHamoru Studies Program Principal Investigators Dr. Kenneth Gofigan Kuper; Dr. Mary Therese F. Cruz, Interim Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences; Dr. Kisha Borja-Quichocho-Calvo; and Dr. Francine M. Naputi; and Grant Manager Dr. James D. Sellmann, Dean of CLASS.

Photo courtesy of University of Guam