



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 6, 2023

For more information, contact:

Louella Losinio
Science Communicator
Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant
University of Guam
Email: losiniom@triton.uog.edu

Students from Micronesia region join new UOG conservation corps

Following three successful seasons of the Guam Green Growth (G3) Conservation Corps, the University of Guam Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant launched the new regional-focused G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps at the UOG Residence Halls on Friday, September 1.

The G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps is strategically tailored to empower university dorm residents from the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands with the skills and knowledge for the emerging green economy, while addressing pressing environmental concerns.

The 10 new G3 Local 2030 Conservation Corps are Sirena Braiel, Chuuk state, FSM; Don David, Pohnpei state, FSM; Joshlynn Eberdong, Palau; Josh Fanapngag, Yap state, FSM; Jesley Ferdinand, Pohnpei; Toyolynn Hilton, Marshall Islands; Jon Arthur Kihleng, Pohnpei; Mc Gee Mereb, Palau; Jonathan Mitsur, Yap; and Aira May Ngalongalo, Saipan, CNMI. As part of the first cohort, each will receive a \$1,300 stipend per semester and 120 continuing education units (CEUs) for their participation in the program.

UOG President Anita Borja Enriquez, DBA, recognizes this pioneering initiative as the next phase of the G3 Conservation Corps.

"As we launch this new program, we're not just empowering dorm residents – we're nurturing a network of change-makers who will drive sustainable solutions for our evolving world," Dr. Enriquez said.

According to UOG Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant Director Austin Shelton, the G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps plays a vital role in advancing the larger movement toward achieving the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals on Guam and in the region.

"This initiative builds on our past success, reaffirming our commitment to prepare our region for a future that harmonizes human well-being, economic growth, and environmental health," Shelton said, and noted that the program serves as a crucial bridge between education and action.

Lt. Governor Josh Tenorio, co-chair of the G3 steering committee, said, "It is here, at UOG, where we lay the foundation for the Micronesian community. It is here that we encounter the future leaders of Micronesia."

The first 10 G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps members represent a diverse group of students from Micronesia.

Participation in the Corps, said Ngalongalo, a Business Administration student and dorm resident assistant, provides an avenue to influence change. "I want change for the CNMI," Ngalongalo said. "In the CNMI, we have landfills that cause contamination to the land."

Jesley Ferdinand, a Civil Engineering student from Pohnpei said, "I want to bring the knowledge back to the island and help sustain it. And since (Guam) is my home away from home, I also want to help the island."

The Corps members will learn practical training across a spectrum of sustainability themes. Focus areas will include agriculture, aquaculture, island beautification, invasive species mitigation, reforestation, circular economy practices, ocean conservation, and harnessing renewable energy. In addition, the inaugural cohort will also participate in activities that support civic engagement and leadership.

###

Photo captions:

Dorm Corps

The University of Guam Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant launches the new regional-focused G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps at the UOG Residence Halls on Friday, September 1. The new Conservation Corps members are Sirena Braiel, Chuuk; Don David, Pohnpei; Joshlynn Eberdong, Palau; Josh Fanapngag, Yap; Jesley Ferdinand, Pohnpei; Toyolynn Hilton, Marshall Islands; Jon Arthur Kihleng, Pohnpei; Mc Gee Mereb, Palau; Jonathan Mitsur, Yap; and Aira May Ngalongalo, Saipan. Some of the dignitaries at the event include Lt. Gov. Josh Tenorio,

Interim Senior Vice President and Provost Sharleen Santos-Bamba and Austin Shelton,
Director of the Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant.

Photos courtesy of University of Guam