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University of Pittsburgh Study Guam 2022



From July 29 to August 13, the University of Guam's School of Engineering and Maila Tatte initiative under Senior Provost Dr. Anita Borja Enriquez partnered with Guampedia, as part of its Culture of Connecting educational project, to host eight students from the University of Pittsburgh's Swanson's School of Engineering, located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The summer of 2022 marked the second year of this program, Engineering Sustainable Design and Innovation in Island Nations: Guam, and was led by Associate Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Pittsburgh, Dr.

David Sanchez, a former resident of Yona.

The students were organized into three groups tasked with projects aimed at conserving and improving Guam's water quality, assessing the potential for culturally and environmentally conscious infrastructure, and promoting and safeguarding the island's traditional healing practices. Prior to their arrival on Guam, students attended weekly online classes during the Summer to learn about the unique connections between sustainability and other facets of life in Guam.

During their two-week visit, students were shown the full

breadth of island life through an intensive schedule that took them to government agencies, non-profit organizations, residential farms, University classrooms and so much more. Students had site visits to Maui Well, KEPCO solar farms, and Northern Water Treatment Plant. They were shown the abundance of Guam's terrestrial and aquatic resources at the [Guam National Wildlife Refuge](#) in Litekyan, [Valley of the Latte](#), and Asan Beach coral reefs. The impact of these resources on the island's food production was explored through a tour of

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the University of Guam's [Triton Farms](#) and a workshop at the local restaurant, [Capitol Kitchen](#). Students were also exposed to the more personal practices of sustainability through tours of [Dr. Marilyn Salas'](#) farm in Humåtak and Shannon Murphy's botanical garden at [Flores Santa Rita](#).

Understanding that the importance of a region's history and culture are fundamental factors in any truly sustainable endeavor, the students were also given tours of the [UOG Micronesia Area Research Center](#), [War in the Pacific National Historic Park](#), [Guam Museum](#), Guam's capital, Hagåtña, and the historic village of Humåtak. During their tour of Hagåtña, students had the opportunity to speak with Speaker Therese Terlaje of the 36th Guam Legislature about the government's role in securing a sustainable future for Guam.

Students also attended full day workshops with master navigator Larry Raigetel and the [Håya Foundation's Guam Yo'åmte](#) at the Saggan Kotturan CHamoru Cultural Center. Raigetel, invited the students to the Pedro Santos Park in Piti where he, along with other Reimethau master navigators and their apprentices, were assembling the UOG Island Wisdom Canoe, Ininan Ilawol. Here, students were able to speak with Raigetel about traditional ocean voyaging as well as assist him in clearing the pathway that the canoe would take from the hut to the ocean. At the Guma' Yo'åmte, students had lessons on the various plants involved in traditional CHamoru medicine as well as various methods of physical and spiritual healing. They were then given the opportunity to experience the traditional healing methods practiced by our Yo'åmte for centuries.

The program culminated in presentations at the Guam Museum, where each group shared what they had learned from their online classes and experiences on the island for the various individuals and agencies that partnered with them. The first group shared the importance of seriously valuing the specific needs and desires of the local people, as well as understanding the ecology of the region before undergoing any attempts at sustainable development. The second group provided assistance to the Håya Foundation's initiative to make the public more aware of the opportunities found at Guma' Yo'åmte through reimagining their online presence to include a redesigned website and creative uses of other social media platforms. The last group, through an analysis of the island's sole source aquifer, offered suggestions to increase the efficiency of island wells while maintaining the quality of water for the public. Each group showed a clear and deep appreciation for all the people they met who taught them that what was essential for any engineer to truly do their job well, they must actively learn about the people, history, culture, governmental structure, and natural resources of the region.

Recordings of each presentation were filmed and will soon be made available. Follow us on our instagram [@guampedia](#) and subscribe to our newsletter to be notified!



Historical Highlights

Sisters of Notre Dame Open School on Guam

In 1946, the [Sisters of Mercy](#) opened their first convent and school in Guam. The initial success of the Sisters of Mercy led many people on the island, parents and parish leaders alike, to request for the opening of more Catholic schools. In May 1949, word spread that the [School Sisters of Notre Dame](#) (SSND) had agreed to come to Guam to open a [grade school](#) in the village of Yona by the following September. On August 10, 1949, seven sisters from Milwaukee arrived in Guam.

Sr. Mary Eric Millitzer, SSND, recalled their arrival 25 years later:

“On this date in 1949, I came

to the island of Guam, believing that it would be my home until the day I died...I remember how much I loved teaching the children and how much I enjoyed knowing each student...I loved being in Guam because of the spiritual opportunities, challenges and direction it gave to my growth as a religious. I especially love and remember each of the families who gave a daughter to our congregation so that the work we began could flourish through them.”

The first local sister to take her final vows as a Notre Dame sister was Sr. Rose Marie Manibusan of Barrigada in July 1959.



*First school sisters of Notre Dame arrive in Guam, 1949/
Courtesy of School Sisters of Notre Dame North American Archives,*

Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands is Pledged



Congress of Micronesia Joint Session, Saipan, 1965. High Commander Norwood delivering state of Territory message/ Courtesy of the Trust Territory Archives.

No sooner was the war over than the debate began over what would happen to the islands captured from Japan. However, President Franklin D. Roosevelt had already made a pledge to decolonization and self-determination in the Atlantic Charter, which he had signed in August 1941, before America even entered the war.

After Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945, President Harry S. Truman stood by the late president’s pledge and, despite the Department of Defense’s opposition, on July 18, 1947, placed the former Japanese Mandated Islands (Micronesia) into the United Nations trusteeship system, to be administered by the US. In signing this agreement, the US recognized that the people of the [Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands](#) (TTPI) had an inherent

right to sovereignty, which could only be changed by the free choice of the people of the islands. Micronesia, including the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, were guaranteed the right to decide on their own what form of government they wanted.

The people of the Northern Marianas were not asked if they wanted to be a part of the TTPI. They had never been asked to be part of Spain, Germany, or Japan. Nonetheless, without any say in the matter, the Northern Mariana Islands, Chuuk, Pohnpei, Palau, the Marshall Islands and Kosrae were lumped together as the TTPI. The people of the Northern Marianas would then continue to be [politically isolated from the people of Guam](#) by a foreign decision outside of their control.