

June 11, 2021

Governor's Education Assistance and Youth Empowerment Grant
Selection Committee
Office of the Governor

Re: "Researching Guam's History to Inspire a Better Society": A Grant to Empower Students Through Understanding Their Island's History Submitted by MARC (UOG)

Hafa Adai Lt. Governor Tenorio and Members of the Review Committee:

On behalf of the Richard Flores Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center, we are pleased to present our proposal "Researching Guam's History to Inspire a Better Society" for consideration.

"Researching Guam's History to Inspire a Better Society" seeks to strengthen student research, analytical, and critical thinking skills by re-establishing the Guam History Day competition, one of the most unique and exciting outreach activities hosted by MARC each year. Funding for this project will be used to carry out two objectives:

- a) Approximately 200 students will acquire research and critical thinking skills through the learning about significant moments in Guam history and analyzing these event and people's motivations through the thematic lens established by the National History Day organization.
- b) Approximately 200 students will demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills through the creation of public presentations of their research findings.

This year-long research competition helps MARC to fulfill a major component of its mission: to provide greater access to its collection by engaging with the community through culturally significant outreach programs. It simultaneously helps students to learn more about the island's history and gain skills needed to succeed in college and in the workplace. Aligned with the National History Day platform, Guam History Day fosters secondary students' ability to think critically about significant events and issues in Guam's history. In past GHD competitions, approximately 500 students competed in their respective school's contests; ninety-two school winners would represent their school at the Guam History Day competition held at the University of Guam and up to twenty-two students would compete at the National History Day contest at the University of Maryland.

Prior to the pandemic, MARC had partnered with the Guam Preservation Trust for over ten years to assist Guam's public, private, and Department of Defense middle and high school students in conducting historical research about the island and hosting the competition where students present their research findings in one of the following formats: paper, exhibit, documentary, website, and performance at an island-wide competition. Select winners were then selected to represent the island at the annual

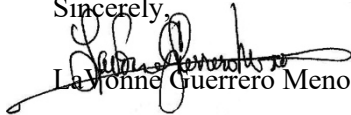


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National History Day held at University of Maryland. In 2020, participation in the island-wide contest dropped drastically to a mere one-third of the students, due primarily to COVID restrictions and the requirement to convert projects into digital formats. The 2021 competition had to be cancelled because social distancing protocols and the MARC library closure to the public prevented students from being able to personally engage in the research process, which is an essential component of the curriculum.

The recent reopening of the University of Guam and the planned in-person learning for all K-12 classrooms not only makes our proposed program feasible, but also highlights the importance of re-engaging students in developing their critical thinking and analytical skills through culturally relevant curricula. Teachers who participated in the program have been urging MARC to re-establish the program because they have seen the transformation their students have made in skills development as well as in civic awareness. Alumni from previous competitions have urged MARC to re-open the competition to help other students become college-ready and to become more informed about their island. It is for these reasons that we present our proposal for your consideration.

Sincerely,



LaYonne Guerrero Meno

Guam History Day State Coordinator



Monique Storie

Dean, University Libraries