Community GRANT AWARDS

The Council offers matching grants to community organizations and ad hoc groups to support a wide range of humanities projects consistent with the goals and objectives of its Strategic Master Plan. During FY 2019, the Council awarded six (6) community grants.

1. Oral Histories of Navigation from Satawal to Saipan
   The Council awarded $17,980 to Jim Marbrook to support digital visualization and audio recordings of oral histories as told by three generations of descendants of Papa Mau: Lino Olopai, Tony Pialug, and Cecilio Raikuilikipil. Cultural preservation of these histories of boat building, celestial navigation, and Micronesian way finding practices will be digitally preserved into a 20-minute documentary for screening on Saipan and throughout the world. Residual footage and other materials collected will be archived and made available on a Video site.

2. Tip of the Spear
   The Council awarded $2,104 to Sophia Perez and Jack Doyle to support the creation of twelve episodes of a new podcast of interviews with the planners, supporters, and resistors of the multiple military build-up plans for the Mariana Islands.

3. Journalism to Empower Communities
   The Council awarded $850 to Rachel Ramirez and Thomas Mangloha to facilitate a one-day journalism workshop on basic reporting, story structure, importance of accuracy and bias, reporting modules, panelists, and conclusion to inspire and motivate the community to become interested in journalism and create a more diverse newsroom around the world.

4. Sharing KPV Collection with Northern Mariana Islands
   The Council awarded $12,288 to Kit Porter Van Meter to support the collection, digitization, and sharing (on kpvcollection.com) 1960s and 70s’ pictures and stories from NM Peace Corps Volunteers and documents related to Chamorro and Carolinian cultures, NMI Education, CNMI status, and Northern Mariana College.

5. Rekindling Marianas Narratives – Write Your Novel
   The Council awarded $175 to Jane Mack to support her efforts to develop a local writing community that uses first-hand experiences and authentic native voices. The project will host 2-hour writing preparation sessions each Saturday in October and encourage participants to participate in National Novel Writing Month.

6. Creation of Pride Marianas Youth Alliance Membership
   The Council awarded $1,500 to Dr. Jennifer F. Maratita to support the planning phases of a non-profit youth organization whose goals are to increase resources, provide education, unify efforts, empower, and raise awareness of the disparities of LGBTQ+ Youth in the CNMI. This includes increasing public participation in humanities programs among underserved segments of the community and training for volunteer youth members to be able to educate the community on the issues that affect their lives.

A Message from the Chair

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council sailed through the rough waters this past year, post Typhoon Yutu. Despite the devastation to Saipan and Tinian, we continued with our mission to navigate the human experience and are excited to share the accomplishments and valuable impact we made in 2019.

The Council continued to work with our community partners to share the diversity we have on our island. Some highlights include our first-ever LGBTQ+ film screening and panel discussion, our increase support for Mothered/Fathered® CNMI, remembering the Battles of Saipan and Tinian on their 75th anniversary through multimedia photo exhibits, and a multitude of great discussions relating to preserving our local culture during Humanities month held in October.

We would like to thank our community and regional partners, donors and the people of the CNMI for their continued support of the Northern Marianas Humanities Council.

Un Dangkulu na si Yu’us Ma’aše’ yan Ghilisow,

Polly DLG. Masga
Board Chair
COUNCIL PROJECTS

75th Anniversary of the Battles of Salipon and Tinian Multimedia Exhibition
The exhibit was a commemoration of the resilience of the Mariana Islanders. Three years before a photographic and videos footage of the US Marine during the summer of 1944 from the National Archives in Maryland were exhibited at the NM Museum of National History, Tinian Public Library, and the Northern Mariana College on Rota between June 12 - August 26, 2019. There were over 500 visitors for the Salipon exhibit, 56 in Tinian and 52 in Rota. Several of the photographs were donated currently at the NM Museum of National History.

Prince Toku's: Boy Erased
RiDEC invited the entire community to screening of the movie "Boy Erased" and host a community discussion. The top ten boys in the movie around the movie’s theme addressing LGBT issues on coming out, family, community, rhetoric in the CNM and Mariana. The event was held on June 27, 2019 at illegal Cinema on Rota with 62 people in attendance.

Garapan Heritage Trail
The Council completed its line of the Garapan Heritage Trail project by working with the Mariana Heritage Preservation Project of Guam and Rota in historic trail sites along the trail. These signs complement sign-guided maps and a downloadable walks to www.garapanheritage.com for feature GPS coordinants and information about history and cultural sites in Garapan.
On September 10, 2019, 40 people participated in a community tour of the trail by the Garapan Historic Tour.

Islands Too Beautiful for Their Names
The Council hosted a community lecture entitled, Islands Too Beautiful for Their Names, a presentation by Dr. Jennifer Jordan, Associate Professor of Regional and Cultural Studies, Asia at the Air Force Research, Language and Culture Center on the captured knowledge of islandens through oral and written history, focusing on the experiences of different islanders towards the islander and the island. The event was held on September 5, 2019 at the American Memorial Park Visitors’ Theater with 80 people in attendance.

Essence: The Traditional Knowledge of the Rotafoula/People
The Council hosted a community lecture entitled Essence: The Traditional Knowledge of the Rotafoula People, a presentation by Cecilia Falconio, a Master Navigator from the School of Wayampey. The presentation focused on describing the knowledge and skills a traditional navigator acquires at stages with emphasis on the prediction of weather and star patterns in the night sky. The event was held on October 28, 2019 at the American Memorial Park Theater with 50 people in attendance. A live streaming video of the event on Facebook reached on additional 472 people.

No Lōlo’i! / First Comorator
The Council launched the No Lōlo’i! / First Comorator, a panel presentation to showcase efforts to protect, preserve, and promote the Chamorro language in the CNMI. Featured panelists included: Deann Teres, First Lady and President of the Lady Copenhagen Foundation, Connie Bostic, Director of the Pinag Chamorro Cultural Language Heritage Studies Program, Roman Tudor Jr., President-Director for the Indigenous Affairs Office, and Carmen Velez, Retired Educator, Author, and Past. The event was held on October 9, 2019 at the American Memorial Park Theater with 28 in attendance. A live streaming video of the event on Facebook reached an additional 175 people.

Amanaki Mawillihali Rotafoula/
Amanaki Mawillihali Rotafoula was a panel presentation to showcase efforts to protect, preserve, and promote the Rotafoula language and culture. The event was attended by Dr. Steve Pia, Executive Director of 500 Save, to showcase the history of reconstituting a modeling of the Chamorros based on the island’s history and language and provided a focus on Amanaki’s role in the CNMI in 1910-1914 and efforts by 500 Save to engage the CNMI community in building and telling these stories. The event was held on October 30, 2019 at the Javelina Memorial Park Theater with 45 attendees. A live streaming video on Facebook was reached on an additional 247 people.

Reviving and Promoting Canoe Culture in the Mariana
The Council hosted a community lecture entitled, Reviving and Promoting Canoe Culture in the Mariana, with Dr. Steve Pia, Executive Director of 500 Save, to showcase the history of reconstituting a modeling of the Chamorros based on the island’s history and language and provided a focus on Amanaki’s role in the CNMI in 1910-1914 and efforts by 500 Save to engage the CNMI community in building and telling these stories. The event was held on October 30, 2019 at the Javelina Memorial Park Theater with 45 attendees. A live streaming video on Facebook reached on an additional 247 people.

LEGACY PROJECTS

22nd Governor’s Humanities Awards
The Governor’s Humanities Awards was held on October 24, 2019 at PIC’s Cristy’s Banquet where the five awardees were donor in these categories: Jerome Michaelich for Research and Publication in the Humanities; Eric Baysa for Preservation of Traditional Chamorro Language and Folklore; and John Alpang for Outstanding Humanities Teacher in the classroom. Enrico Perez for Outstanding Humanities Teacher in a non-classroom setting and Dr. Boyd Dean for the Lifetime Achievement award. Former Board members Frankino Blixon, Magdaleno Meningon, and Gordon Moriones were recognized each for ten years of service to the Council.

15th Annual High School Mock Trial
The Junior High Mock Trial was established in 2005 to help students develop useful knowledge about the law and courtroom procedures. The program also provides students with thinking skills and helps students develop the skills necessary for the competitive high school-level program. The year’s event took place on March 30, 2019 at the Guam High School. Each of the four participating middle schools: Dr. Rita Hoog en Jr. High School, Saipan Community School, Garapan Junior High School, and Simon Sanchez High School selected its defense and prosecution teams, with both attorneys and witnesses and deliberated on a fictitious case.

16th Annual Valentine Sengaeu Poetry Competition
The Sengaeu Poetry Competition features middle school students who recite from “Micronesian” written by Valentine Sengaeu. The Chamorro Anthology of Poets. High school students recite original poems. The event was held at the American Memorial Park, Visitor’s Theater on October 15, 2019 and was attended by 75 people.

4th Marian Hall Conference
The Council co-hosted the 4th Marian Hall Conference on Guam at the University of Guam campus between August 8 - September 5, 2019. The conference featured keynote speakers Dr. Robert Schwegler of the University of Hawaii, Dr. Richard Kishi, and Dr. Stephen Chen of Indiana University. The conference featured over 90 papers including 16 sessions, with 568 children of ages 9-13 with activities that promote reading comprehension; critical thinking, family values, and problem-solving skills. Thanks to feedback from parents, community partners, Mothers热水器/Fatherhood@CNMI adopted a new name and logo!

Your Humanities Half-Hour
Your Humanities Half-Hour is a 30-minute weekly radio talk show airing on a local radio station Pecker 99, which also streams live on the internet. Hosted and directed by CVRC and Virgin Media and by Gun Picay, the show welcomes 50 guests speaking on various Chamorro-related humanities topics of their experience or expertise; in addition to numerous brief on-the-air interviews. "Your Humanities Half-Hour" radio show aired on Guam, including several broadcasts with predominantly indigenous Chamorro and Rotafoula language speakers. Through these shows, the Council for the Humanities and Access to Knowledge held 17 workshops and conferences for the Humanities Councils. "Your Humanities Half-Hour" is a 30-minute broadcast on a variety of humanities topics of their experience or expertise, in addition to numerous brief on-the-air interviews. "Your Humanities Half-Hour" radio show aired on Guam, including several broadcasts with predominantly indigenous Chamorro and Rotafoula language speakers. Through these shows, the Council for the Humanities and Access to Knowledge held 17 workshops and conferences for the Humanities Councils. "Your Humanities Half-Hour" is a 30-minute broadcast on a variety of humanities topics of their experience or expertise, in addition to numerous brief on-the-air interviews. "Your Humanities Half-Hour" radio show aired on Guam, including several broadcasts with predominantly indigenous Chamorro and Rotafoula language speakers. Through these shows, the Council for the Humanities and Access to Knowledge held 17 workshops and conferences for the Humanities Councils.

50th Anniversary of the Micronesian Regeneration Association of Okinawa Visit to Saipan
The Council printed a graphic card with historical information about Okinawans who migrated to the Marianas islands prior to World War II which was distributed during the 50th anniversary of the Micronesian Regeneration Association of Okinawa visit to Saipan on August 29, 2019.

PIC Filmaker’s Lab
The Council provided student support for 4 CNMI residents to travel to a 5-day filmmaker’s lab at the Guam Museum – an event sponsored by the Pacific Islanders in Communications and the Guam International Film Festival between March 25 - 29, 2019.

6th Annual Women’s Summit
The Council provided travel support for Retired Blythes, Ethnographer and Oral Historian from the Mariana Area Research Program (MARAP) and members of the 6th Annual Women’s Summit on March 29, 2019 as its keynote speaker.

NOTABLE ACTIVITIES

50th Anniversary of the Micronesian Regeneration Association of Okinawa Visit to Saipan
The Council printed a graphic card with historical information about Okinawans who migrated to the Marianas islands prior to World War II which was distributed during the 50th anniversary of the Micronesian Regeneration Association of Okinawa visit to Saipan on August 29, 2019.

NEH Chair Visit to Saipan
Jan Piskel, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, visited Saipan on November 14, 2019 and met with students, community leaders, and leaders to promote the Humanities and learn more about the CNMI and its people. Some of Chiefmor's impressions were captured on Your Humanities Half-Hour Radio Show which can be accessed online at the Council’s YouTube channel.

National Humanities Conference
The National Council for the Humanities sponsored the National Humanities Conference, held at the National Humanities Council in Honolulu, Hawaii between November 7-9, 2019. The conference focused on the creation of State Humanities Councils and the National Humanities Alliance as a resource to bring together the humanities community across the nation to network with the 56 Centers for Multicultural Humanities. As a co-host, our Council facilitated a number of activities and sessions during the conference, including the closing plenary panel entitled "The Navigating Water: traditional healing in the Pacific Islands".