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Key Leader Engagement Part II: CINCPAC



On April 28, 2023, the Honorable Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga met with the U.S. Pacific Fleet Deputy Commander, Rear Admiral Blake L. Converse and Foreign Policy Advisor to the Commander, Noah Zaring. Admiral Sam Paparo of the United States Navy met briefly with the Honorable Governor and delegation before proceeding to a concurrent meeting.

Rear Admiral Blake L. Converse, who resided in American Samoa with his family and had a professional tenure at ASPA. His brother graduated from Marist High School and his sister completed her High School studies in Leone. The Converse family is well-acquainted with the locality of American Samoa.

The meeting commenced with a brief tour of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, who led the naval victory over Japan in WWII. It was evident from the enthusiasm of the delegation that they were impressed and inspired by Admiral Nimitz's legacy.

This visit underscored the importance of learning from historic leaders to chart new paths to success, especially in times of crisis. In the face of uncertainty and adversity, leaders like Admiral Nimitz have demonstrated the value of forward-thinking and strategic decision-making. The delegation was able to take away valuable insights from Admiral Nimitz's achievements in the Pacific Fleet, especially his leadership during World War II.

During the roundtable discussion, improving workforce capabilities and growing the workforce were identified as part of the crucial factors for further economic development in American Samoa.

With the Select USA Summit coming up, Honorable Governor Lemanu highlighted expanding American Samoa's foreign investment opportunities in shipyard industry as a viable option for creating more jobs and sustainable economic development. However, to successfully enter this type of industry, American Samoa must prioritize the development of a skilled workforce. As the global economy continues to evolve, it is imperative for countries to create and maintain a highly skilled workforce that can adapt to different industries. This sentiment has become increasingly relevant in American Samoa, where training opportunities have been limited due to geographical constraints. However, Admiral emphasized similar training programs available in Hawaii that could benefit AS current shipyard workers. The Admiral discussed how private and Naval Shipyards in Hawaii offer various training programs that would provide invaluable skills and knowledge transferable to the AS community.

The discussion further delved into the exploration of renewable energy sources and their potential capabilities. Admiral Converse emphasized the success of similar training programs in Hawaii and the potential to collaborate to provide homegrown talent opportunities for employment. Incorporating these training programs and creating job opportunities strengthens the local economy.

RADM Converse deliberated on the prospects of securing foundation grants for establishing training programs at ASCC to equip individuals with renewable energy proficiencies, including maintenance techniques. This is aimed at facilitating renewable energies in American Samoa.

Honorable Governor Lemanu is taking this proactive approach to ensure American Samoa becomes the hub of economic advancement in the Pacific region.

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