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TAPUITEA

The Official Newsletter of the American Samoa Government

IA MANINO LE FOLAUGA

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The Department of Human Resources Launches 2023 Summer Youth Employment Program



On June 26, 2023, the Department of Human Resources held an official opening ceremony of the highly anticipated Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), organized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Division. Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga delivered the keynote address at the ceremony.

The Lemanu-Talauega Administration is a strong advocate for youth development and opportunities, and Governor Lemanu conveyed their full support towards the SYEP program. “The SYEP holds immense promise in fostering the growth and potential of our youth. Lieutenant Governor Talauega and I are committed to empowering them with valuable experiences and shaping a brighter

future for the next generation,” Governor Lemanu remarked. He commended the Department of Human Resources and Director Lynn Alaimalo for their dedication to nurture the talent and potential of the youth through the sustained hosting of the SYEP year after year.

Governor Lemanu directly addressed the youth, highlighting the importance of discerning private and public entities as an important factor in their future development. He stated, “Throughout your participation in this program, may you acquire a deep understanding of the existing dynamics between government and private entities. These realms hold great significance for your future endeavors.”

Governor Lemanu continued, “This year’s theme, ‘Tulitulimatagau ina ia fa’aa’upegaina,’ which means to continuously strive and pursue to be well prepared and equipped. It is our hope that you embrace this initiative to pursue your goals.

Furthermore, Governor Lemanu advised the worksite supervisors to provide effective mentorship to the youth throughout their participation, and expressed his gratitude for their involvement. He stated, “I’d like to thank all the departments, agencies, organizations, and private businesses involved for offering invaluable opportunities to the youth, enabling them to gain firsthand experience in the workforce.”

The SYEP, organized by DHR in collaboration with government departments and agencies, local businesses and organizations, is an eight-week program that offers an incredible opportunity for youth to gain essential skills, explore potential career paths, and cultivate a strong work ethic during the summer break. DHR Director Alaimalo announced that this year's summer program will host 1,000 youth participants.



Consistently



pursuing



The program is designed to provide young participants, aged 16-21, with hands-on experience across various industries, enabling them to develop critical professional skills while earning income. Participants will have the chance to engage in meaningful work, mentorship opportunities, and workshops that promote personal and career development. They have already been assigned worksites during registration, and their first day of work begins today.

to be



well-equipped



American Samoa Students Graduate From the National Army Guard Youth Challenge Academy



Pictured: Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Academy Graduating Class 22-02 (58).

On Thursday, June 15, 2023 the Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Academy hosted a graduation ceremony at the Tom Moffatt Waikiki Shell, Honolulu, Hawaii, where sixty-five cadets were recognized for their achievements. Twenty five students departed American Samoa in January 2023 to attend this Academy. One student returned home, and the remaining twenty four students excelled and graduated.

Honorable Josh Green, M.D., Governor of the State of Hawaii delivered special remarks to Class 58 at the ceremony. During his remarks, Governor Green expressed his appreciation for the cadets from American Samoa, “Another reason why I chose to be here today, and why I am so honored, is because of the number of students here from American Samoa,” remarked Governor Green. He continued, “My team and our State have a special relationship with (American) Samoa. They are an extension of us and they have gone through struggles as well: They have undergone the Measles pandemic in which we endured with them; and they bravely faced the COVID crisis. Now these young individuals that have come here to grow with our young people in Hawaii, it was important for me to see this,” stated Governor Green.

The Commander of Troops Cadet August Tasi, from the village of Lauli’i, represented Class 58 during the ceremony, and shared about the arduous journey of the 24 students who departed American Samoa to join the academy program. He also conveyed his deepest appreciation to Governor Green for allowing American Samoa to participate in the program, and requested an inclusive opportunity for more youth of our territory to join.

The award ceremony revealed a host of additional accomplishments for American Samoa cadets. The Senator Gabbard Scholarship Program for Leadership and Community Building Studies Award was presented to Cadet Posiano Penitito, who will be attending Leeward Community College to pursue a degree in Teaching. The Military Order of Foreign Wars Bronze Medal for Leadership was presented to Cadet Usugafono Simiti. Cadet August Tasi was honored as the male recipient of the Commandant's Presidential Physical Fitness Award. The Adjutant General's Leadership Award was presented to Charles Satele, who achieved four awards of recognition for good conduct, academic achievement, and discipline. Following graduation, Mr. Satele will enlist in the United States Army.

Earlier this year, on February 16, 2023, Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga appealed to the United States Department of Defense (DoD) for the recruiters' decision to reject the students who were U. S. Nationals from the program. The Governor's request was approved and a memorandum was later issued by the DoD to overturn the decision regarding U.S. Nationals and changing the eligibility requirements for the program. The 13 students who were forced to travel home were arranged to return to the academy to continue the program.



The Hawaii Youth Challenge Academy is a voluntary, residential, military-style program aimed at providing youth between the ages of 16 to 18, who have dropped out of high school or are at risk with a second chance to complete their education. The program provides a structured, disciplined, and peer-oriented environment that encourages positive behavior and includes academic classes, physical training, counseling, and community service projects. The Academy was founded in August 1994 and is administered by the Hawai'i Army National Guard, with campuses in Kalaeloa on O'ahu and in Hilo on the Big Island.

Alagaupu Fa'asamoa

E Pipii Tia ae Mamao Ala



O lenei alagaupu e faatatau i tia e iai falevao o le auselupe e felata'i ae tutu i vanu. Ia ua tumutumu. E lagona mai le talanoa atu e le 'auseu i le tasi tia aga'i i le auselupe i le isi tia.

Ae a oo ina savali atu le auseu e potopoto i se itu e tasi, e toe o ifo i le vanu ma fe'a'ei a'e ai i le isi tia. E mamao na'ua le ala savali i le va o tia. E iai le upu pe a fiu i savali, E PIIII TIA AE MAMAO ALA.

O lenei alagaupu e tele ona fa'aogaina i taimi e taumavae ai ni mafutaga.



New DOE School Lunch Warehouse Building Dedication in Ta'u, Manu'a



Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga, accompanied by distinguished guests and community leaders, presided over the grand dedication ceremony of the newly erected Department of Education School Lunch Warehouse in Ta'u, Manu'a, on Friday, June 9, 2023. This facility, a testament to the Lemanu-Talauega Administration's commitment to education and to promote the health and well-being of students in American Samoa, will significantly enhance the school lunch program operations throughout the Manu'a District.

"This is the first of many future projects for the Manu'atele; there are infrastructure projects lined up such as the Ofu Airport runway repairs, new school buildings, road projects, and more." remarked Governor Lemanu.

Governor Lemanu expressed his gratitude to all who contributed to the realization of the new building. "This is a milestone for the School Lunch Program in Manu'a and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor Talauega, I'd like to extend our gratitude to all those who have made this possible. I commend the district and village leaders for your support and your patience for the government's efforts for Manu'atele," continued Governor Lemanu.

The construction of the building was undertaken by Atuatasi Ieremia Seigafo, the owner of Quality Paint. Reverend Elder Iosefa Autele was given the honors of cutting the ribbon to officially open the doors of the facility. The ceremony also featured a tour of the warehouse building.



Faiivae Alexander Godinet Sworn In as Western District Governor

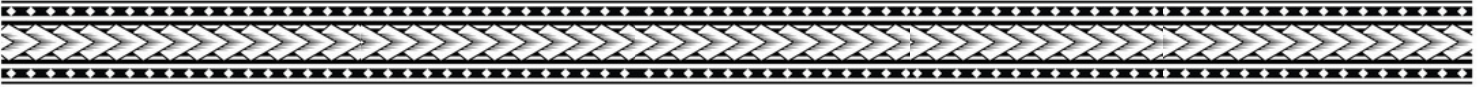


On June 20, 2023, Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga and distinguished guests witnessed the swearing-in of the New Western District Governor, former Senator from Fofu District, Faiivae Alexander Godinet at the Suigaula o le Atuvasa in Utulei.

The commencing ceremony took place in the presence of Associate Judge Fiti Sunia, who administered the oath of office, officially inaugurating Faiivae Godinet as the Western District Governor. Shortly thereafter, a traditional Samoan Ava ceremony took place, conducted by Deputy Secretary of Samoan Affairs Tauese V. Sunia. Government and district leaders expressed their support and bestowed their blessings upon Mr. Godinet's new appointment.

Governor Lemanu warmly welcomed the new Western District Governor stating, "On behalf of the people of American Samoa, I extend my sincere congratulations to District Governor Faiivae Godinet on assuming this significant position." He continued, "Your unwavering commitment to public service and dedication to our community will undoubtedly prove invaluable in governing the affairs of our people and preserving our cherished traditions with utmost integrity."

After the Ava ceremony, the family of District Governor Faiivae presented traditional gifts to all who attended, conveying their gratitude for the support and well wishes received. Distinguished guests in attendance to witness this occasion included Secretary of Samoan Affairs, Mauga Tasi Asuega, President of the Senate Tu'alo M. Fru'an, Speaker of the House Savali Talavou Ale, Eastern District Governor Matautia Afonotele, GO Chaplain Mageo Patolo Mageo, Chief of Staff Loa Tuimavave Laupola, Senator Malaepule Moliga, Deputy Secretary of Samoan Affairs Tauese V. Sunia, esteemed district leaders of the Western District, village and church leaders of Leone, and family members of the new district governor.



Governor Lemanu Takes Action on TBAS' Failure to File Audited Financial Statements



In a letter dated June 7, 2023, Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga called on the Territorial Bank of American Samoa (TBAS) Board of Directors and the Office of Financial Institutions to take action to address the failure of leadership at TBAS that caused the bank to be unable to timely file its audited

Financial and Profit and Loss Statement as required under local law. This failure affects far more than TBAS and its obligations under the law. As the bank is owned by the American Samoa Government, the lack of an audited financial statement from TBAS impacts ASG's governmentwide audit, its obligations to bond investors, and potentially the American Samoa's credit rating.

According to the American Samoa Code Annotated, it is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer of TBAS to effectively and efficiently manage the bank. Failure to meet the requirements of the law and failure to understand or be concerned for the potential impact on ASG is neither effective nor efficient management. As such, Governor Lemanu issued a letter to TBAS calling for the removal and replacement of TBAS CEO David Buehler. Because of the potential effects of this failure on ASG; the Governor also requested that OFI file a complaint for suspension or removal on the CEO pursuant to A.S.C.A. § 28.1204.

“The people of American Samoa deserve effective and efficient management of the people's bank,” stated Governor Lemanu. He added, “Accountability for failures such as these is one way to assure customers and investors that ASG is doing its part to promote effective and efficient management.”

Commencement of the 195th Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council Meeting

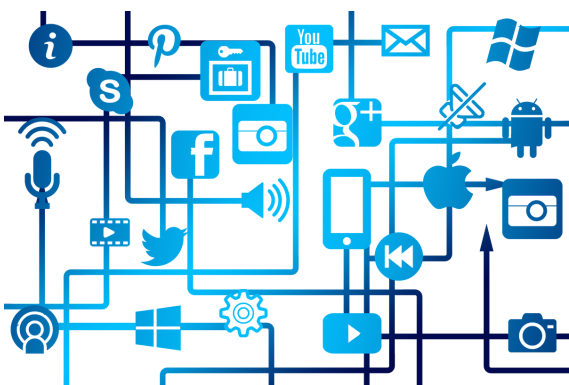


Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga and the Secretary of Samoan Affairs, Afioga Mauga Tasi Asuega, conducted a traditional Ava Ceremony to honor the esteemed council members of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (WPRFMC) at the Suigaula o le Atuvasa in Utulei, on June 27, 2023. Following the ava ceremony, the official opening of the WPRFMC 195th Council Meeting was held at the Rex H. Lee Auditorium. Governor Lemanu delivered the opening remarks that underscored the significance of responsible fishery practices, environmental stewardship, and the economic impact of the fishing industry on the region. Governor Lemanu also expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the WPRFMC, its members, and associated organizations in promoting sustainable fishing practices and protecting the marine ecosystem. The council plenary is from June 27 to June 29, 2023.

American Samoa to Receive Over \$37 Million for High Speed Internet

The United States Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) today announced it has allocated funding to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five territories to deploy affordable, reliable high-speed Internet service to everyone in America. American Samoa stands to receive \$37,564,827.53 from this program. This “Internet for All” initiative is a key component of President Biden’s “Investing in America” agenda.

“What this announcement means for people across the country is that if you don’t have access to quality, affordable high-speed Internet service now – you will, thanks to President Biden and his commitment to investing in America,” said Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. “This is a watershed moment for millions of people across America who lack access to a high-speed Internet connection. Access to Internet service is necessary for work, education, healthcare, and more,” said Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communication and Information Alan Davidson.



The BEAD funding will be used to deploy or upgrade broadband networks to ensure that everyone has access to reliable, affordable, high-speed Internet service. Once deployment goals are met, any remaining funding can be used to pursue eligible access-, adoption-, and equity-related uses.



The Department of Commerce Assistant Director Michael McDonald attended the Internet For All Announcement Ceremony held in White House on June 26, 2023. [Photo Credit: DOC]

“This is a great day for the United States and a great day for American Samoa,” stated Governor Lemanu P. S. Mauga. “Rural and remote communities like American Samoa are at a disadvantage when it comes to participating in our global economy and community. These investments into high speed internet will help close the digital divide and get our people closer to competing on equal footing. Education, healthcare, job creation, and economic opportunities all received a big boost today. We have a great deal of work ahead of us, but this is a great step in the right direction,” added Governor Lemanu.

On March 7, 2023, Governor Lemanu issued an executive order to formally establish the Broadband Coordination office under the Department of Commerce, informally known as the BCORD Office. The BCORD office will be responsible for administering American Samoa’s allocation via the BEAD program (Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment). For more information on this and other broadband programs, call the Department of Commerce at 633-5155 or email broadband@doc.as.gov.

In the Community



The Agency for Better Living Endeavors (ABLE) is on their second week of Discovering Amerika Samoa program. The children participating in this Summer's program visited farms, various ASG departments, and learning more about the people of Amerika Samoa. [Photo Credit: ABLE Facebook Page]



The Department of Youth and Women Affairs completed its Floral Arrangements and Handicraft program on June 21, 2023. [Photo Credit: DYWA Facebook Page]



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STORIES TO
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Upcoming Events

- July 4 Independence Day
- July 10 Opening of Fono 4th Regular Session
- July 16 Manu'a Cession Day
- July 28 Island Wide Clean Up
- July 29 - August 4 Samoa Heritage (Hawaii)
- August 4 US Coast Guard's Birthday

