

College of Micronesia
CTEC Multi-Purpose Technical Building
Groundbreaking Ceremony
Wednesday, July 21, 2021 at 10am
Statement by Secretary of TC&I

Ladies and Gentlemen, Good morning. Please allow me to begin by paying my respects to our traditional community ...

Iheng! Mwohn meh-karos, Re Ketin kupwure pwe l'en kak warohng weliandi kahlapoko oh tiengki sapwelimahr depwekin-leng en wahu oh kaping ong pahn kupwuren [samatail enihlap] – Kauno Koht pwehki Kupwur Rosoulap en Powe, me kin sansal-ohng kitail ahnsou karos.

Pwehki kasarawi en rahnwet ah pahn WAIRIHR pohn dopwekin-leng en Pohnpei-uh – oh pahn ele lelohng pahn kupwuren Ereki sohko karos en Pohnpei-uh, oh nan FSM, I men kapatahieng ei tungol sekeren keipweni pohn Ereki sohko en Pohnpei-uh, Wahu-lap pahn kupwuren Isohko, Nahnalek-ko, Nahnkeniei-ko, oh wauneki lapalap karos en Pohnpei-uh, patehng lapalap'en tiahk karos pohn State karos en FSM. Ah pwehki _____ me ketin ketdier mwohn kasarawi kesempwal en rahnwet, I patowen pwelik ei tungol sekeren wahu tohror ong _____. Re ket nan kasarawi kesempwal en rahnwet.

Acknowledgements

Honorable Governor Reed Oliver, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps
Ambassador Zheng and members of the diplomatic corps, Members of
National and State Cabinet, US Charge D' affaires Ms. Kristin Westphal,
Chairwoman of the COM Board of Regions Ms. Suzanne Gallen, Interim

President of the College of Micronesia Ms. Karen Simion, Ladies and Gentlemen, Good morning.

Apology:

I have been given the honor to represent H.E President David W. Panuelo in this Ground Breaking ceremony for the CTEC Multi-Purpose Technical Building. The President expressed his regrets for his unavailability due to the need to attend to official business outside of the Country. He nevertheless has asked me to extend his congratulations to the College for this important project and his appreciation to the US Government for the generous financial assistance provided to fund it.

Remarks

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is certainly a privilege for me to join you this morning as we plant the seed of a tree or a project that we can expect will bear many fruits for many generations to come. With the excellent cooperation between the College, Pohnpei State Government, the National Government and with US financial support, I am confident that we have created some very fertile soil for this tree to grow strong and flourish. This CTEC Multipurpose Building will play a central role in improving the educational infrastructure in the FSM and will enable COM to deliver a higher standard of technical and vocational training for young Micronesians.

This project comes at the right time.

As we seek to improve our economy and raise living standards, we urgently need more skilled workers in the technical and vocational field. We need more electricians, mechanics, plumbers, computer technicians, etc., who are fully trained and accredited.

There is no doubt that our human resources capacity must be upgraded in order to support the efforts of the National and State Governments to expand basic infrastructure and services.

The demand for trained workers will also increase as a result of the new initiatives which have been launched by President Panuelo, including the “pave the nation program” as well as a stronger focus on renewable energy, environmental conservation, climate change and the blue economy.

On behalf of the FSM National Government, I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the excellent collaboration and teamwork between COM, FSM TC&I, Pohnpei State Government, the Office of Compact Management and the Office of Insular Affairs of the US Government. This collaboration has made it possible to complete all pre-construction activities so that we are now ready to start the construction of this important project.

To give a **brief overview** of the project.

- The CTEC Multipurpose Building is part of a comprehensive Masterplan for COM which was developed by an International consulting firm, Beca Consultants, in 2013.
- The designs for the building were prepared by the same Consultant, Beca International, through a design contract with FSM TC&I that was signed in 2017. The designs were extensively reviewed by the U.S Army Corps of Engineers to ensure that they comply with all relevant codes and standards.

- The contract for the construction of the building was awarded to **ABCOR Engineering and Construction**, for a contract price of about \$5.4 million, after a process of open competitive bidding.
- A grant to finance the construction contract has been approved by OIA and the funds are now available for disbursement.

In this connection, I wish to extend special recognition and appreciation to Charge' Westphal and the US Government for their continued financial assistance towards our nation building efforts. The US, historically has been our strongest development partner and continues to be the largest source of foreign aid to this nation. We are truly grateful that through your continued support, we are people to gather today to further enhance our investment in the most important resource in this nation – our human resource.

Before closing, I wish to extend my utmost appreciation to Governor Oliver and our host state of Pohnpei. We are grateful for the State's continued support of national projects and activities like this which directly benefit all residents of the state and the nation. The unwavering commitment of Pohnpei towards the College dates back to the days of the old Community College of Micronesia.

In Closing, let me congratulate the COM and the Project Team for your excellent work and I can assure you that DTC&I will be providing all necessary technical support and supervision to ensure that the CTEC building is completed on time and within the budget. Thank you.