



For Immediate Release

GVB reconnects with Pacific Islanders in North America

CHamoru organizations key to evolve commerce of travel to Guam

(September 28, 2022 - San Diego, California) In an effort to reconnect with the stateside community of CHamorus and those with ties to Guam in North America, the Guam Visitors Bureau (GVB) has announced that it has successfully completed its mission at the 28th Pacific Islander Festival Association (PIFA) at Ski Beach in San Diego, California.

The large annual event, which hasn't been held since 2019, captured over 300,000 Pacific Islanders that came together to perpetuate the cultures and values of the indigenous people of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia from September 24-25. GVB has been an official sponsor of PIFA since its inception. The event this year had a total of 123 vendors with representation from Guam, the CNMI, Tahiti, Pohnpei, Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa, Hawaii, Tokelau, Fiji, and Tonga.

"We are making a diligent effort to build up our North America market by reconnecting with the Guamanian diaspora and our extended family, friends and military families that are linked to the island. We updated them on our goals to build up seat capacity and better rates with our airline partners by working out more affordable travel packages to Guam," said GVB President & CEO Carl T.C. Gutierrez. "Our presence at PIFA and meeting with the different groups here in San Diego is so important to the recovery and evolution of tourism."

Meeting the Sons and Daughters of Guam

With assistance from Sons and Daughters of Guam Club member Jojo Borja and her husband, Sakman Chamorro Project Director Mario Borja, GVB hosted a meet and greet with over 200 people in attendance at the club's home in San Diego. The long-standing organization has existed since 1953 and is currently led by President Antolin Tajeron and Board Chairwoman Brenda Diaz. Gutierrez shared updates on Guam's tourism recovery efforts and committed GVB's support to the organization, as well as the House of Chamorros, and Chamorro Hands in Education Links Unity (CHELU) to further preserve, promote, and perpetuate the CHamoru culture and language in the US mainland.

House of Chamorros evolution

In addition to meeting with the Sons and Daughters of Guam, GVB also met board members with the House of Chamorros to tour their newly opened home at the International Cottages in Balboa Park. President Jeff Macaraeg, Vice President Janice (Waller) Bouffiou, Board Members Philip Gogue Jr. and Dolores (Loling) Cepeda, and Liaison Lori Waller discussed the group's global vision for Guam and the Marianas, while President Gutierrez shared plans to work with existing airline carriers to further develop the future commerce of travel to the island.

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