



# The Pacific Public Health Fellowship Program

## 2025 Graduation Highlights - Cohort 4

January Edition, 2026



## Building the Next Generation of Local USAPI Public Health Leaders and Champions

### The PPHFP is a two-year training program

that equips recent college graduates with practical, hands-on public health training, competencies, and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Field Epidemiology.

Supervised by highly experienced and seasoned frontline public health professionals, the PPHFP immerses Fellows in real-world public health practice, to help strengthen the USAPI workforce pipeline, ready to meet current and emerging USAPI health priorities.

Our 4<sup>th</sup> Cohort graduated in 2025, with **all PPHFP Fellows successfully transitioned into the local USAPI workforce**, marking another milestone in strengthening local capacity and cultivating the next generation of USAPI public health leaders.

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# Strengthening the USAPI Public Health Workforce Pipeline

## **Message from the PPHFP Team**

As we enter 2026, we proudly celebrate the successful graduation of PIHOA's Pacific Public Health Fellowship Program (PPHFP), Cohort 4.

In 2025, ten rising public health professionals demonstrated remarkable dedication as they trained across the USAPIs, building critical public health capacity and making a meaningful impact in their island communities.

Congratulations to all ten PPHFP Fellows, who graduated Cohort 4 of the PPHFP Fellowship, and **successfully transitioned to employment** in local USAPI Ministries and Departments of Health, helping to strengthen the local workforce pipeline.

This PPHFP newsletter highlights their achievements and contributions to the USAPI Ministries and Departments of Health. We are deeply grateful for the vital role of mentorship and partnership from their Host Site Supervisors and local leadership, who continue to support building a skilled, competent, and Pacific-led public health workforce.

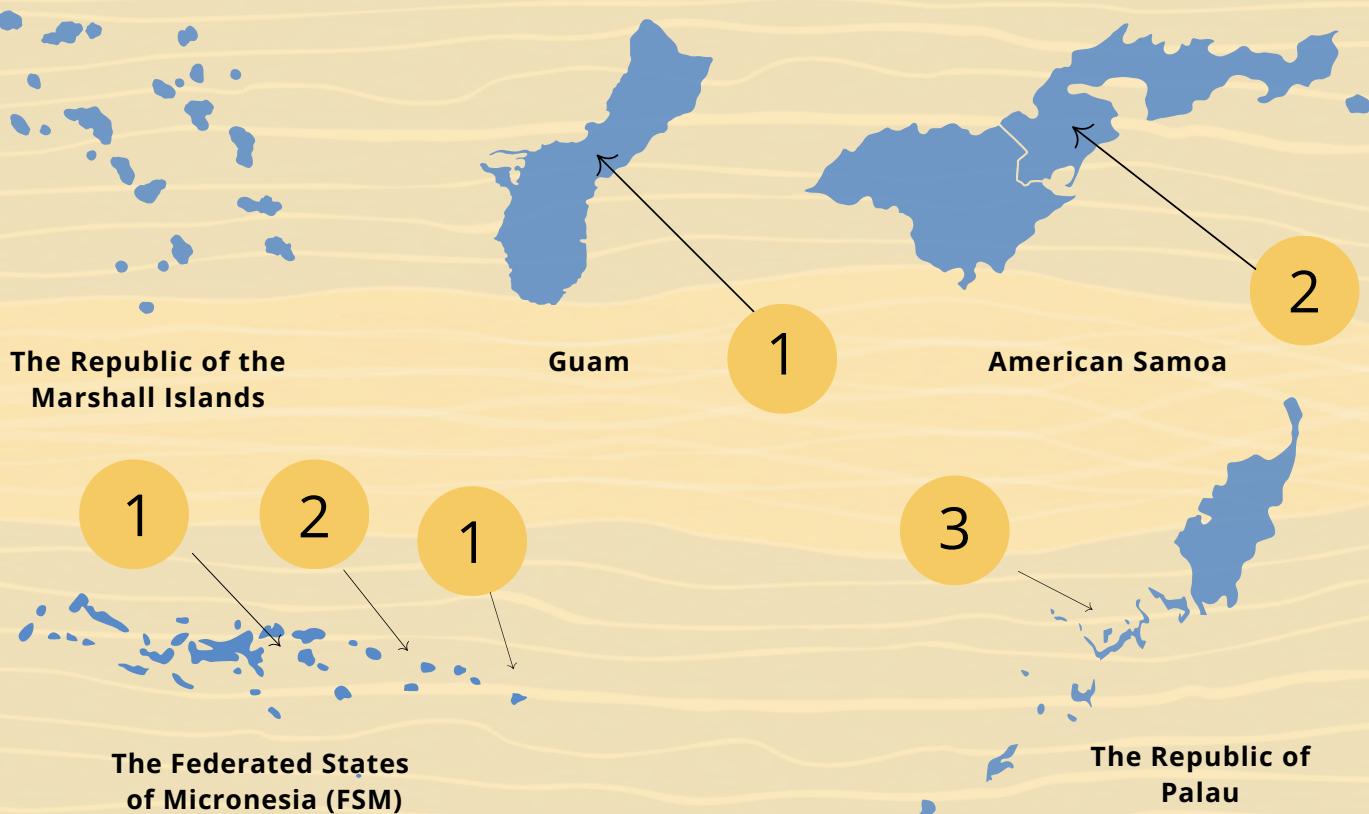
Congratulations Cohort 4! 

Your journey is just beginning... We look forward to seeing you all in the frontlines of public health for your Islands in 2026, and beyond!



# PPHFP Cohort 4

Fellowship Term: August 2023 – July 2025



## Projects Completed

29



**Taputailo Fe'a**

Maternal and Child Health  
American Samoa  
Department of Health



**Meghan Paletaoga**

Maternal and Child Health  
American Samoa  
Department of Health



**Joaquin Alik**

TB / Leprosy Program  
Pohnpei State Department  
of Health and Social Services



**Karmi Alik**

Laboratory  
Pohnpei State Department  
of Health and Social Services

## Trainings Completed

77



**Kendall Titimil**

Community Health Center  
Palau Ministry of Health  
and Human Services



**Kebang Ngiraklang**

Belau Hospital Pharmacy  
Palau Ministry of Health  
and Human Services



**Kedei Yaoch**

Communicable Diseases  
Palau Ministry of Health  
and Human Services



**Cameron Murphy**

Maternal and Child Health  
Guam Department of Public  
Health and Social Services

## Key Deliverables

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**Lyma Nero**

TB Program  
Chuuk State Department  
of Health Services



**Kun Neth**

Communicable Diseases  
Kosrae State Department  
of Health Services



# GUAM

## DEPARTMENT

Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services

## PROGRAM

Maternal and Child Health Program

## EMPLOYED

Data Control Clerk II

Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

Amy St. Pierre  
PPHFP Fellow

**Cameron Murphy**  
Supervised by Margarita Gay

*“ PPHFP has been like a doorway — one that leads to new ideas, countless possibilities, and tons of support. Since becoming a Fellow, I've been able to leave my desk to better connect with my community, and I feel now that my voice is heard.*



## Key Deliverables

- Create a maternal and child health dashboard
- Create death, infant death, fetal demise, and marriage spreadsheets for public health agencies.
- SOP for data collection and dissemination
- Data abstraction for MMRIA
- Creating policies/manual for MMRC
- Promotion of educational material: Hear Her Campaign, maternal warning signs, health clinic resources
- Breastfeeding education
- Letters of support for MMRC
- Charts and presentations for maternal and child health needs assessment
- Home visiting calendar (CQI Project)

## Projects

Maternal and infant mortality and morbidity

Support the establishment and operation of a Maternal Mortality Review Committee (MMRC)

Understanding and improving local access to maternal healthcare

## Skills Gained

- Data analysis and visualization
- Social and leadership skills
- Working with community, and the public
- Establishing a program or committee from scratch (policies, budgeting, organization of people and resources)

## Trainings Attended

9

# PALAU

## DEPARTMENT

Ministry of Health  
and Human Services

## PROGRAM

Communicable Disease Program

## EMPLOYED

Surveillance Officer  
Communicable Disease Program

Fellow

**Kedei Yaoch**

Supervised by Connie Olikong

*“Serving in Palau through the PIHOA Fellowship taught me that impactful public health begins with community, compassion, and commitment. Every challenge became a lesson, and every connection a step toward lasting change.”*



## Key Deliverables

- Development of a viral hepatitis Epi profile
- Creation of a screening intake form in the Bangladeshi language
- One-page publication of communicable disease unit story board

## Skills Gained

- Analytic and assessment
- Policy development
- Program planning
- Communication
- Community partnership
- Leadership and systems thinking
- Community outreach
- Contact tracing

## Trainings Attended

8

# PALAU

## DEPARTMENT

Ministry of Health  
and Human Services

## PROGRAM

Belau Hospital Pharmacy

## EMPLOYED

Pharmacy Assistant  
Balau Hospital Pharmacy

Fellow

**Kebang Ngiraklang**

Supervised by Clarette Matlab

*“During this fellowship, I've developed new strengths in health education, community outreach, and data-driven decision-making - all tools I'll carry into my public health pharmacy career to create lasting impact.*



## Key Deliverables

- Report: Antibiotic prescriptions patterns and inappropriate use
- Information flyer: Medication Information for Belau National Hospital

## Skills Gained

- Data analysis
- Report writing
- Communication skills
- Public speaking
- Networking

## Trainings Attended

5

## Project

Antibiotic prescription pattern and their inappropriate use to treat infections at Belau National Hospital from May to December 2023

# PALAU

## DEPARTMENT

Palau Ministry of Health  
and Human Services

## PROGRAM

Community Health Center

## EMPLOYED

Patient Care Coordinator  
Palau Community Health Center

Fellow

**Kendall Titimil**

Supervised by Edolem Ikerdeu

*"This program has given me the tools and connections I need to confidently enter the public health workplace, equipped and ready to serve my community."*



## Key Deliverables

- Creation of the Palau Community Health Center billing and collections dashboard
- Palau HPV vaccination social marketing plan and campaign
- Assessment, policy development and implementation training of tele-health project

## Skills Gained

- Data analysis (quantitative and qualitative)
- Interpersonal skills and professionalism in the public health workplace
- Technical skills on SMS reminder system
- Technical writing
- Program planning
- Conducting focus groups

## Trainings Attended

5

## Projects

Palau community health center  
billing and collections  
discrepancies

Palau HPV vaccination  
social marketing plan

Palau community health  
center telehealth project

# AMERICAN SAMOA

## DEPARTMENT

American Samoa  
Department of Health

## PROGRAM

Maternal and Child Health  
Program

## EMPLOYED

Newborn Screener / Health Educator  
Helping Babies Hear / STD Program

Amy St. Pierre  
PPHFP Fellow

**Taputailo Fe'a**

Supervised by Dr. Anaise Uso  
and Bethany Malae-Toelupe

*"A tafe manino le matavai  
ona tae'ele fiafia lea o  
ma'a o le alia."*

*"Every rock in the water  
will be pure if the spring  
runs clear."*



## Key Deliverables

- Brief summary: Data protocols for collecting Early Intervention (EI) referrals and enrollment
- List and description of program reports in SILAS
- Table comparing EI referrals and enrollment rates (2023)
- Report: Gaps in EI referral and enrollment process
- MOU draft with Part C program
- Infographic: Next steps after hearing loss identification (Samoan)
- Infographic: Ear care/hygiene (English/Samoan)
- Summary report: Hear Her Campaign research
- Survey: Hear Her Campaign
- Data table and PowerPoint: Hear Her Campaign results
- Flowchart and SOP for the maternal and child health program
- Poster: Epidemiologic profile of women having live births (2024); Hear Her Campaign material, and video creation.

## Skills Gained

- Public health knowledge and application
- Data management and analysis
- Community engagement and communication
- Training and collaboration
- Technical and administrative skills
- Program planning skills
- Health equity skills
- Management and finance skills
- Leadership and systems thinking skills

## Trainings Attended

10



# AMERICAN SAMOA

## DEPARTMENT

American Samoa  
Department of Health

## PROGRAM

Maternal and Child Health  
Program

## EMPLOYED

MCH Epidemiology Technician  
Maternal and Child Health Program

Amy St. Pierre  
PPHFP Fellow

**Meghan Paletaoga**

Supervised by Dr. Anaise Uso  
and Ipu Eliapo

## THYROID GOITER



*"O le ala i le Pule o le  
Tautua"  
  
The pathway to leadership  
is through service.*

## Key Deliverables

- Creation of a SOP for rheumatic heart disease data collection and reporting
- Report: Analysis of rheumatic heart disease and Rheumatic fever in American Samoa
- Creation of rheumatic heart disease Factsheet

## Skills Gained

- Evaluation, data entry and analysis
- Communication skills
- Partnership skills
- Technical writing and excel skills
- Professionalism skills
- Leadership skills
- Coordination skills

## Trainings Attended

10

# POHNPEI



Fellow

**Joaquin Alik**

Supervised by Mercedes  
Gilmette

DEPARTMENT

**Pohnpei State Department  
of Health and Social Services**

PROGRAM

**TB / Hansens Disease Program**

EMPLOYED

**Hansen's Disease Program  
Coordinator**

“ One of the most meaningful parts of this Fellowship was to expand our skills and knowledge about what public health is and how to be in the field helping those who are in need. This Fellowship helped me gain valuable experience, strengthen perseverance, enhance adaptability, and resilience. I am thankful to the Fellowship for all the mentorship and encouragement which allows me to make a difference in my community. I can't wait to use everything that I have gained in this Fellowship for my Island! ” ”

## Key Deliverables

- Create a standard operating procedure for screening diabetes mellitus patients for tuberculosis
- Created leprosy outreach materials
- Conducted outreach and screenings across Pohnpei

## Skills Gained

- Tuberculin skin test (TST/PPD)
- Data management: collect, enter, clean, analyze and report data
- Health equity
- Strong communication skills
- Gained leadership qualities: collaboration, empathy, resiliency, and compassion.

## Trainings Attended

## Projects

Screening diabetes mellitus patients for tuberculosis

Create outreach materials (brochures, pamphlets, booklets, posters)

Strengthen program mission (detect, treat, eliminate)



# POHNPEI

## DEPARTMENT

Pohnpei State Department of Health and Social Services

## PROGRAM

Pohnpei Hospital Laboratory

## EMPLOYED

Medical Laboratory Technologist

Fellow

**Karmi Soar Alik**

Supervised by Ledua Wati Vukialau

“

*One of the most meaningful parts of this fellowship program was the continuous support throughout the Fellowship - ranging from professional direct guidance to personal encouragement. This program has also expanded my understanding of public health, and I really appreciate the dedication of my fellows who also share the same inspiration for our island communities.*

”



## Projects

Laboratory Quality Management Systems (LQMS)

Laboratory finance, budgeting, and planning

Laboratory surveillance of AMR, PCSI diseases and target outbreak-prone diseases

Prevalence of antimicrobial resistance in Pohnpei State Hospital from January 2024 to March 2025

Antibiogram



## Key Deliverables

- Report: Prevalence of antimicrobial resistance in Pohnpei State Hospital January 2024 to March 2025
- Create standard operational procedure for laboratory surveillance weekly report specifically for antimicrobial resistance.

## Skills Gained

- Data analysis
- Effective communication
- Supervising
- Planning
- Interpretation of results

## Trainings Attended

10



# CHUUK

## DEPARTMENT

**Chuuk State Department  
of Health and Social Services**

## PROGRAM

**TB Program**

## EMPLOYED

**TB Program Coordinator**

Fellow

**Lyma Nero**

Supervised by Dr. Dorina Fred

*“This Fellowship Program helped me to gain valuable experience, network with health professionals, and develop a stronger understanding of the public health field. Additionally, it gave me more self-assurance and enabled me to take on new tasks to better serve my Island.”*



## Key Deliverables

- Development of a standard operating procedure for TB contact tracing for the TB Program, with flow chart.
- Training of staff in new SOP and its implementation for the Division of Public Health

## Skills Gained

- Data analysis
- Communication skills,
- Technical writing skills
- Create SOPs and system flow charts
- Leadership development

## Trainings Attended

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# KOSRAE



Fellow

**Kun Neth**

Supervised by Elias David  
and Foster Waguk

DEPARTMENT

**Kosrae State Department  
of Health and Social Services**

PROGRAM

**Communicable Disease Program**

EMPLOYED

**Surveillance Officer**

“

*Leadership is unlocking  
people's potential to become  
better." (Bill Bradley)*

*This is what I believe the  
PPHFP Fellowship has done to  
me.*

”



## Key Deliverables

- Creation of brochures for STI's
  - Designed brochures
  - Translate into local language
  - Distribution of brochures to targeted locations
    - E.g. Highschools and small stores in each village
- Community education and outreach
  - Target high risk population in Kosrae
  - Testing at targeted locations
- Hansen's disease profile to improve standard procedures and reporting for Kosrae Health Services
- Creation of SOP for Hansen's disease in Kosrae

## Project

Hansen's Disease:  
A profile to improve  
standard procedures and  
reporting for Kosrae Health  
Services

## Skills Gained

- Data collection and analysis
- Communication skills
- Community engagement
- Public speaking

## Trainings Attended

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# Thank you to our partners

## CDC and Host Site Supervisors

“

PPHFP is a very good or one of the best avenues to recruiting into the public health workforce. We just really benefitted from all of the Fellows.

**-Host Site Supervisor**

”



**We extend our heartfelt thanks**  
to the Centers for Disease Control and  
Prevention (CDC), and to our  
dedicated PPHFP Host Site Supervisors  
for their continued partnership and  
mentorship.

Your collaboration has been essential in  
creating meaningful learning experiences  
and strengthening the public health  
workforce across the region.

We are deeply grateful for your  
commitment to this shared mission.

“

We are going to lose  
two of our senior  
staff, they are  
retiring this year. So  
[fellow] is going to be  
taking over the key  
positions here. They  
are trained now to do  
it, so we are really  
happy we had this  
PPHFP opportunity.

**Host Site  
Supervisor**

”

“

Their competency is  
really shining out. At  
the beginning you have  
to guide them, but over  
time, they then take  
initiative. Now I  
consider her as a senior  
staff. She actually is.  
She's one of our senior  
staff now, training  
others, especially all  
the new staff coming in.

**Host Site Supervisor**

”

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