

I ESTORIAN I KUMISIÓN I FINO' CHAMORU  
YAN I FINA'NÅ'GUEN I HISTORIA YAN  
I LINA'LA' I TAOTAO TANO'

2017-2024



KAO UN HUNGOK?



# KAO UN HUNGOK?

I Estorian i Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru yan  
i Fina'nâ'guen i Historia yan i Lina'la' i Taotao Tâno'

2017-2024

Pinepblikan



I Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru yan  
i Fina'nâ'guen i Historia yan i Lina'la' i Taotao Tâno'

*Commission on CHamoru Language and the Teaching of the History and  
Culture of the Indigenous People of Guam*

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Guåhan 2024



UFISINAN I MAGA'HÅGAN GUÅHAN  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR OF GUAM



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MAGA'HÅGA



**JOSHUA F. TENORIO**  
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**2024**

# I SEYON I KUMISIÓN



There are several distinct symbols that have been incorporated into how we chose to represent our work as the Commission on CHamoru Language and the Teaching of the History and Culture of the Indigenous People of Guam. Our logo is shaped both like a sling stone, which is part of the artifactual legacy of the ancient CHamoru latte' builders; and, an eye to represent sight or vision. Indigenous insight is known as mǎta or mana throughout the Island Pacific.

As a Commission, we draw on the wisdom of our ancestors to interpret our reality both past and present. This wisdom allows us to see beyond the physical. It connects us with a force more powerful than our individual selves. It creates a safe space for confronting power with truth. In this state of consciousness, we discover what it means to be CHamoru.

Inside the eye are symbols which frame our way of life. The heat of the sun and the light of the moon which influence our designation of time and season are represented by the orange orb and the white sinåhi. We are the Taotao Tåno' yan Tåsi or people of the land and sea, hence the image of the green hilly landscape and buoyant blue waves of our ocean.

Graphic Designer, Bryan Duenas

# I MENSÅHI GINEN I GÉ'HELO'



The Kumisión is pleased to present *Kao Un Hungok? A Report of our Progress 2017-2024*. Sometimes, treasures are hidden in plain sight. In line with this thought, I am convinced that the wonderful work of the Kumisión is not well known. Hence, through this publication, we share the milestones we have reached in our CHamoru revitalization programs and projects since we were established.

Our journey thus far has not been easy. A sustainable funding stream is still out of reach. Our legal status from a “line agency” to “public non-profit corporation” awaits legislative remedy. The pandemic stalled our early momentum. Finding a team of full-time professionals and the resources to compensate them has been challenging. Notwithstanding, board members were selected in part for their expertise and certainly for their unwavering commitment to promoting, preserving, and revitalizing the CHamoru language, and the teaching of the history and culture of the Taotao Tåno'. So, we have made significant strides despite obstacles along the way.

The level of performance that our predecessors provided set the standard for our current Kumisión. We know that we walk in the footsteps of champions, many of whom are still actively engaged. Realizing our nation-building vision and executing our legal mandates has been the riveting focus of all our energy and activities. The thoughtful and generous support and enthusiastic encouragement we have received from Maga'håga Lou Leon Guerrero and Sigundo Maga'låhi Josh Tenorio have provided us with opportunities to expand our footprint substantially. We express our heartfelt gratitude. We also want to recognize the consideration and support of Kuikuentos Therese Terlaje and the members of the Liheslaturan Guåhan. Your generosity and timely intervention when needed is greatly appreciated.

Federal grants from the Association of Native Americans (ANA), the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the Educational Stabilization Fund (ESF), and Humanities Guåhan have provided much-needed recovery funding and support for long-term initiatives, publications, compensation for CHamoru Experts, interns and honoraria for community engagement. Without these funding sources, we would not have been able to make substantive advances in our research, publications, multimedia products and programs.

The painstaking work of summarizing seven years in the journey of the Kumisión involved me as team lead, our Board members, and the entire staff. I would like to express heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to all for providing insights, sharing photographs, memories, and records of our strategic priorities and accomplishments for fulfilling the mandates that are embodied in the CHamoru Heritage Acts of 2016, which re-established the current Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru.

Special Recognition goes to our production team:

Piatra Tuncap  
Lucelle Lizama  
Savannah Concepcion

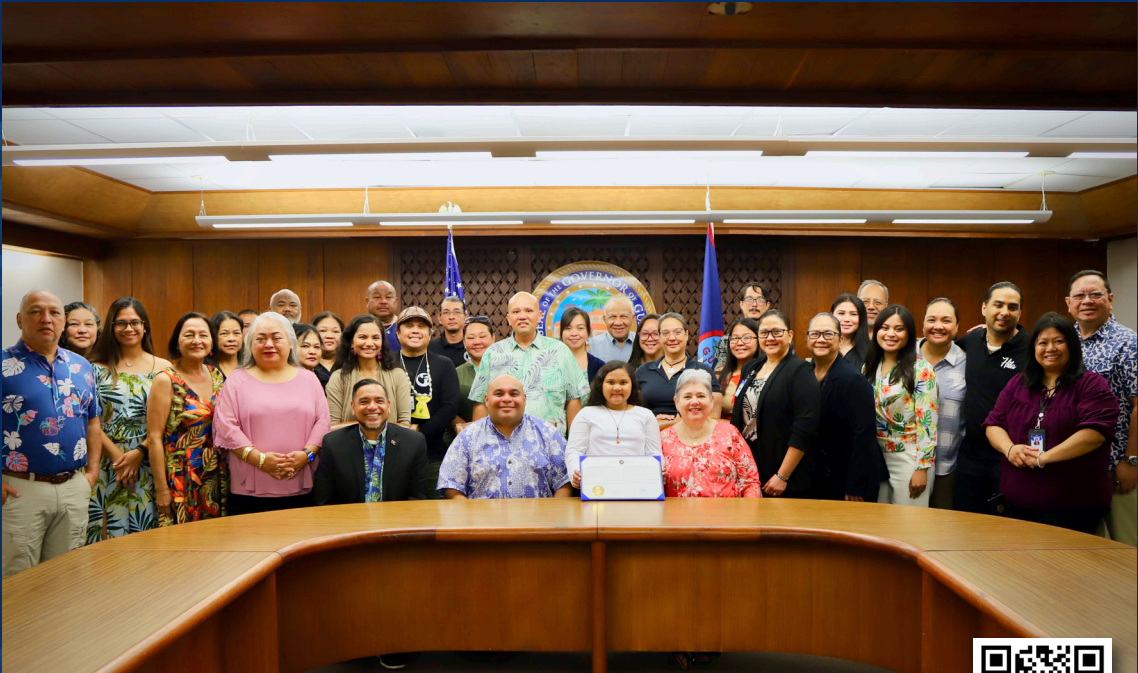




FAÑODDA'AN

01	I HINENGGEN-MĀMI	58	NA'DINANCHE I DINILITREHAN CHAMORU
02	TINANGA	59	PUT I DINILITREHAN CHAMORU
03	ININTREGA	60	PRUKLAMASI'ON I HA'ĀNEN HILA' NĀNA.
04	INENGKĀTGA		21 GI FIBRERU
08	I HISTORIAN-MĀMI	62	2022-2032 NU I LENGGUĀHEN I MANAOTAO
10	I MANGGÉ' HELO' I KUMISI'ON SIHA		TĀNO' ENTENASI'ONĀT
11	I MEMBRO SIHA	64	RIPÓT KADA SĀKKAN
12	I MANEMPLEHAO SIHA	65	HINAGO': EXPANSION OF ARCHIVE
13	I MANMALOFFAN NA MEMBRO YAN		AND RESOURCE LIBRARY
	EMPLEHAO SIHA	66	RINIKOHEN RIKUETDO
14	SAGAN FINAMTA' CHAMORU	70	HINAGO': PARTNERSHIPS, ALLIANCES,
17	I FONDON-MĀMI		AND NETWORKS
20	I MAGA' PLĀNU	71	FINA' NĀ' GUEN I MANDIKIKE'
21	HINAGO': LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION	72	GINIHAN MANTEKNO'
	INITIATIVES AND FACILITATION TOOLS	73	SETBISI'ON BISITAN GUĀHAN
22	TI ATRASĀSAO	74	INĀFA' MAOLEK GINEN I SENGSONG
23	NINĀ' DINANCHEN DINILITREHA	75	INĀFA' MAOLEK YAN I MAÑE' LU-TA
24	FANEYĀKAN SIHA	76	INAYUDAN I MANHOBEN
25	TINAITAI YAN KĀNTA SIHA	77	GIHA
26	FINO' I HA'ĀNI	78	UMEYAK CHAMORU
27	LISTAN PALĀBRA	79	KULEHON KUMUNIDĀT GUĀHAN
28	KUMITÉ I NA'AN LUGĀT	80	DINANŊA' MAMFĀFA' NĀ' GUE
29	DINILITREHAN YAN SINANGAN I	82	ESKUELAN SAN FRANCISCO
	NA'AN LUGĀT SIHA	83	BISHOP MUSEUM
30	NA'AN I SENGSONG YAN OTRO LUGĀT	84	HALE' TAOTAO HĀYA
	SIHA	85	UNITED STATES BOARD OF GEOGRAPHIC
31	SAGAN FINAMTA'		NAMES
32	GIHA MĀS MO'NA	86	DIPĀTTAMENTON KĀOHAO GUINAHAN
33	UTUGRAFIHAN CHAMORU, GUĀHAN		CHAMORU YAN I INANGOKKON INADAHEN
34	FANMINATĀYAN		GUĀHAN
35	PROYEKTON NSF	87	UNIBETSIDĀT GUĀHAN
36	HINAGO': LANGUAGE, CULTURE,	88	DIBISI'ON INESTUDION CHAMORU YAN
	HISTORY, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH		ESPESIĀT NA PRUGĀMA SIHA
37	LINAKNGOS LINAKSE'	89	HINAGO': TRANSLATION SERVICES
38	FINATTAN CHAMORU	90	SETBISI'ON PINILA' SIHA
40	SETTIFIKON NINA' FITMEN PROGRĀMAN	91	SETBISI'U PARA I AHENSIA'N PŪPBLEKU
	SINIPOK CHAMORU	92	HINAGO': PUBLICATIONS/PRINTING AND
42	MUDELON I ESKUELAN DOS LENGGUĀHI		DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING RESOURCES
44	FINATTAN TININGO'	93	GINEN I HILA' NĀNA
45	FINA' NĀ' GUEN I UTUGRAFIHA	94	CHAMORU FLUENCY AND PROFICIENCY
46	DINANŊA' PUT I FINO' TAOTAO TĀNO'		ASSESSMENT TOOLS
	SIHA	95	NA'AN LUGĀT: GINEN I MAÑAINA-TA
48	FINA' CHE' CHO' YAN FINATTAN I	96	TINIRORON NENI
	DISENDENSIA'N I MAÑAINA	97	TINANUMI
49	HINENGGEN CHAMORU	98	KĀTTAN FINIHO'
50	KONFERENSIA'N I HISTORIAN MARIĀNAS	99	I FANSELABĀYAN
51	DINANŊA' MANHOBEN NATIBU	100	KAO UN HUNGOK?
	ENTENASI'ONĀT	101	INEYAK FINO' CHAMORU PARA I
52	PIBBA		FAMAGU'ON
53	INACHĀ' IGEN FINO' CHAMORU	102	FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
54	HINAGO': MARKETING OF SERVICES	107	RETHINKING OUR REALITY
55	INEPPOK PARA I PŪPBLEKU	108	UNESCO LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT
56	INEPPOK GUINAHĀ		FRAMEWORK
57	IYON-MĀMI UEBSAIT	110	THE NUMBERS WE CANNOT IGNORE

I HINENGGEN-MĀMI



The Kumisión embraces the centering of CHamoru values, beliefs, and language to serve as the foundation in executing our primary mission. We work to ensure the continuity of our CHamoru peoplehood and nationhood by fostering the restoration and revitalization of our language, culture, and history as Guåhan's Taotao Tāno'.

We believe that CHamoru, the indigenous language of the Taotao Tāno', must be learned, used, and transmitted to future generations. Further, the CHamoru language, cultural values, traditions, and history can be preserved and taught through initiatives that build and sustain a CHamoru literacy infrastructure in partnerships with government, educational institutions, and organizations dedicated to this mission.

As the lead agency for developing, supporting, and leading CHamoru initiatives and interventions, we act to ensure that CHamoru is learned and spoken intergenerationally and that young speakers are developed for the future survivability of our indigenous language and culture.



# TINANGA



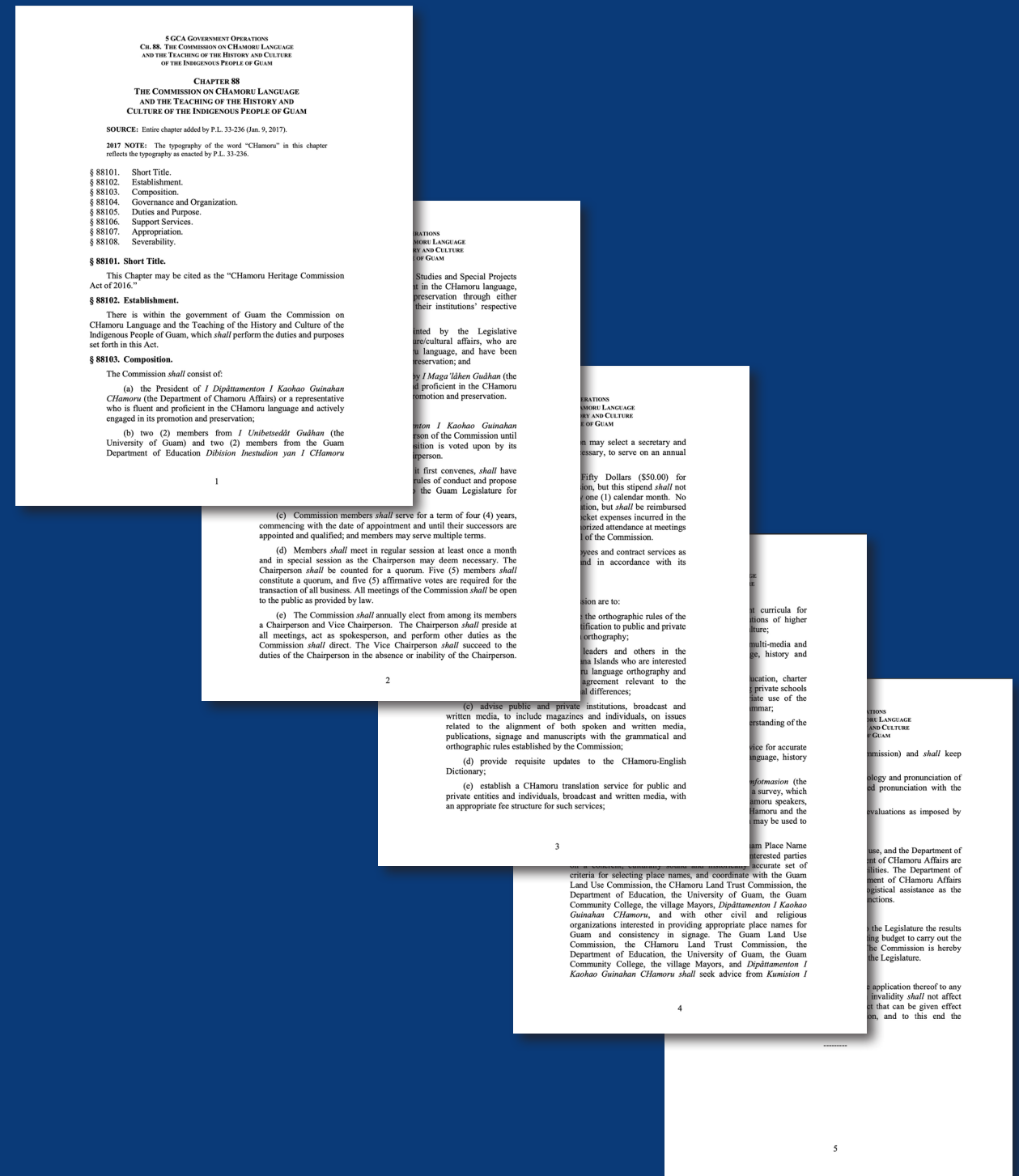
“ U chalåni, u su'on mo'na yan u  
hotkonuyi i lina'la' CHamoru; u ta atitutuyi  
i kinahulo' tinaotao yan u petsigi i fino'  
CHamoru, i lina'la', yan i finaloffan i  
Taotao Tåno' Guåhan.

*We lead nation-building efforts to ensure the continuity of  
our CHamoru peoplehood and nationhood by fostering the  
restoration and revitalization of our language, culture, and  
history as Guåhan's Taotao Tåno'.*

”

# ININTREGA

To execute the mandates of  
The CHamoru Heritage Commission Act of 2016





# INENGKÅTGA



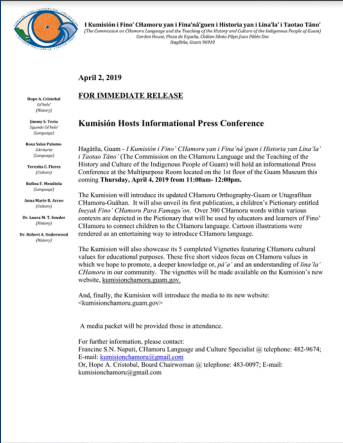
1

Continually study and update the orthographic rules of the CHamoru language; and provide notification to public and private institutions of updates to the CHamoru Orthography.



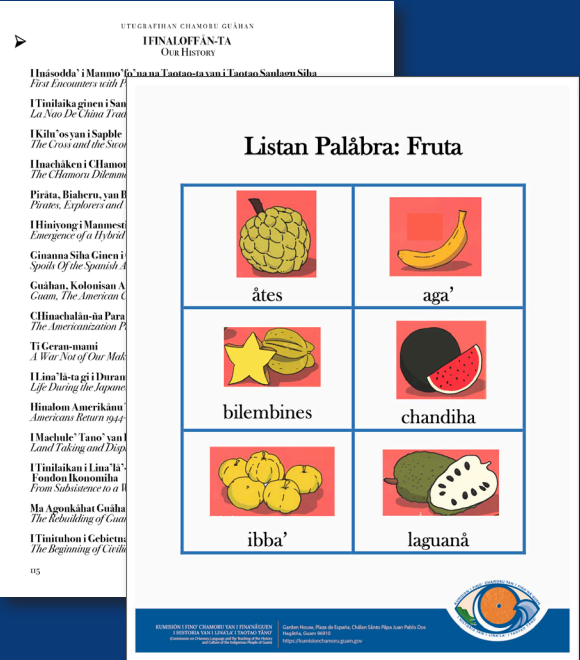
2

Consult with the government leaders and others in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands who are interested in the standardization of the CHamoru language orthography and seek to recognize and establish agreement relevant to the orthography, as well as existing regional differences.



3

Advise public and private institutions, broadcast and written media, including magazines and individuals, on issues related to the alignment of both spoken and written media, publications, signage, and manuscripts with the grammatical and orthographic rules established by the Commission.



4

Provide requisite updates to the CHamoru-English Dictionary.



5

Establish a CHamoru translation service for public and private entities and individuals, broadcast, and written media with an appropriate fee structure for such services.



6

Develop standardized and culturally relevant curricula for mandated courses in Guåhan's schools and institutions of higher learning related to Guåhan's history, language, and culture.





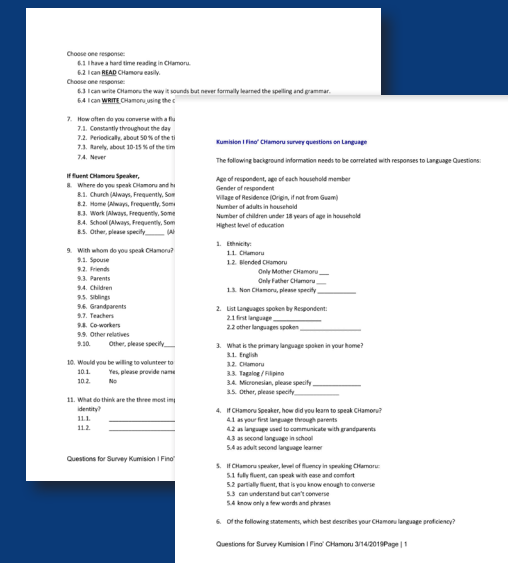
**7** Conduct research, publish, and produce multi-media and print materials relating to the CHamoru language, history, and culture.



**10** Function as a clearinghouse to provide advice and affirmation for accurate representations and interpretations of CHamoru language, history, and culture.



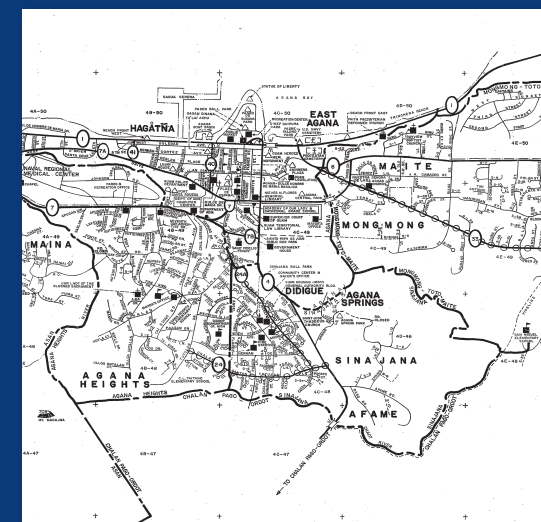
**8** Coordinate with the Department of Education, charter schools, and other educational institutions, including private schools, and businesses in Guåhan to ensure the appropriate use of the adopted standardized CHamoru orthography and grammar.



**11** Work with *I Sagan Plånu Siha yan Emfot-masión* (the Bureau of Statistics and Plans) to plan and conduct a survey, which may seek to determine the existing number of CHamoru speakers and/or the existing number of children learning CHamoru and the occurrence of the intergenerational transmission, which may be used to direct CHamoru revitalization program efforts.



**9** Provide training to promote increased understanding of the CHamoru heritage.



**12** Serve as the Kumisión i Na'an Lugát (Guåhan Place Names Commission) to develop, implement, and advise interested parties on a coherent, culturally sound, and historically accurate set of criteria for selecting place names.

**13** Study ancient CHamoru terminology and pronunciation of place names, and restore aforementioned pronunciation with the current CHamoru Orthography.



# I HISTORIAN-MÅMI

The first Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru was established by the 7th Guam Legislature in 1964. A joint committee effort with representatives from both Guåhan and the Northern Mariånas resulted in an orthography for the CHamoru language, which was completed in 1971. This orthography was adopted as the Mariånas Orthography and later revised as the 1983 CHamoru Orthography. The current official *Utugrafihan CHamoru, Guåhan* is based on the 1983 Mariånas-wide adopted version.

The previous Kumisión, which was officially appointed in 1974 was also tasked with regularly updating the CHamoru-English dictionary. In the 1980s, members of the Kumisión worked with all government institutions to create CHamoru names for their respective agencies using the newly adopted CHamoru orthography. These names are still in use today.

For thirty years, the Kumisión dedicated its resources to moving the CHamoru language forward while also serving as the Guam Place Names Commission. However, in 1999, with the passage of Public Law 25-69, all duties and responsibilities of the Kumisión were transferred to the Department of CHamoru Affairs.

Recognizing that young speakers were not being produced and that the continuity of the CHamoru language had become endangered, community advocates pressed for a renewed effort to guide the revitalization cause. After a nearly twenty-year hiatus, the Kumisión was re-established under the leadership of Speaker Judith WonPat and Vice Speaker Tina Muña-Barnes during the 33rd Guam Legislature. Codified under 5 GCA Chapter 88 (Public Law 33-236), the current Kumisión was created by the CHamoru Heritage Act of 2016. It is named, I Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru yan Fina'nå'guen i Historia yan Lina'la' i Taotao Tåno' or, The Commission on CHamoru Language and the Teaching of the History and Culture of the Indigenous People of Guam.

Like its predecessor, one of the main duties of the Kumisión is to act as the primary authority for Fino'CHamoru, where it is tasked with promoting the full application of the standardization of spelling contained in the *Utugrafihan CHamoru, Guåhan*. It is also mandated to serve as the Kumisión i Na'an Lugåt Guåhan (Guam Place Names Commission). In this role, the Kumisión is responsible for developing, implementing, and advising on a coherent, culturally sound, and historically accurate set of criteria for selecting place names.



KUMISIÓN I FINO' CHAMORU  
RIPRISENTÁNTEN GUBETNAMENTO,  
PLAZA DE ESPANA, 1998



KUMISIÓN I FINO' CHAMORU  
Board Members, 2017



I MANGGÉ'HELO' SIHA GI KUMISIÓN



Dr. Laura M. Torres Souder, Gé'helo'  
Governor's Appointee  
2017-Present



Hope A. Cristobal, Bisa Gé'helo'  
Legislative Appointee  
2017-Present

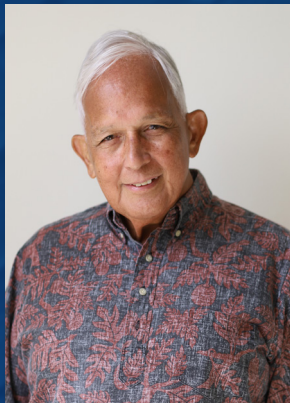


Rosa S. Palomo, Sikritària  
Governor's Appointee  
2017-Present

I MEMBRO SIHA



Teresita Concepcion Flores  
UOG Appointee  
2017-Present



Dr. Robert A. Underwood  
UOG Appointee  
2017-Present



Rufina Ferejan Mendiola  
GDOE Appointee  
2017-Present



Jimmy Santos Teria  
GDOE Appointee  
2017-Present



Pàle' Felixberto C.  
Leon Guerrero, O.F.M., Cap.  
Legislative Appointee  
2019-Present



Melvin B. Won Pat-Borja  
DCA President  
2021-Present



Sumàhi Bevacqua  
Guam Youth Congress Representative  
2023-Present



# I MANEMPLEHAO SIHA



**MARIA SAN DUENAS-CONCEPCION**  
Executive Director



**LUCIA CALVO**  
Program Coordinator I



**DAKOTA CAMACHO**  
Special Projects Coordinator



**SAVANNAH CONCEPCION**  
Board Secretary



**PETER CONSTANTINO**  
Special Projects Coordinator



**ELERIDA CRUZ**  
Administrative Assitant



**LUCELLE LIZAMA**  
Multimedia Technician II



**FRANCISCO SANTOS**  
Computer Systems Analyst I



**PIATRA TUNCAP**  
Graphic Artist I

# I MANMALOFFAN NA MEMBRO YAN EMPLHAO SIHA

## PAST BOARD MEMBERS

ANNA MARIE B. ARCEO  
DCA President  
2019 - 2020

PETER ONEDERA  
Legislative Appointee  
2017 - 2019

JOHNNY SABLAN  
DCA President  
2017 - 2018

## PAST ADMINISTRATORS

DR. LISALINDA NATIVIDAD  
Administrator  
September 2022 - August 2023

ANNA MARIE B. ARCEO  
Administrator  
June 2020 - June 2022

## PAST STAFF

JOAQUIN CONCEPCION (defunto)  
Multimedia Technician II  
April 2022 - October 2023

ELYSSA SANTOS  
Special Projects Coordinator  
January 2020 - February 2023

ROCHELLE BAMBA-CRUZ  
Special Projects Coordinator  
November 2021 - December 2022

SELENA ONEDERA SALAS  
CHamoru Language & Culture Specialist  
August 2022 - November 2022

JOE GARRIDO  
CHamoru Language & Culture Specialist  
September 2021 - August 2022

FLORENCE LANDRY  
Board Secretary  
October 2021 - June 2022

CODY LIZAMA  
CHamoru Language & Culture Specialist  
August 2021 - May 2022

ROLAND BLAS  
Board Secretary  
March 2019 - July 2021

ERICA A. PANGELINAN  
Special Projects Coordinator  
February 2020 - November 2021

HA'ANI L. SAN NICOLAS  
CHamoru Language & Culture Specialist  
February 2020 - July 2021

DR. FRANCINE M.S.N. NAPUTI  
CHamoru Language & Culture Specialist  
September 2018 - June 2021

BONNIE J.G. TENORIO  
Administrative Assistant  
August 2019 - January 2020

FRANCISCA SANTOS (defunta)  
Board Secretary  
September 2018 - January 2019



# SAGAN FINAMTA' CHAMORU



In 2019, the Kumisión began working with Guam Department of Education (GDOE) to allocate temporary office space in Building E in Tiyan. When the Guåhan Academy Charter School (GACS) became the lessee, 1,670 square feet of space was issued for the Kumisión's use through an MOU signed by Governor Lou Leon Guerrero. By July 2020, the Kumisión relocated to Tiyan. This location served as the Language Revitalization Center and Administrative Office for the Kumisión through the COVID lockdown period. Our increase in staff and growing needs, however, required the Kumisión to search for a larger office space.

Since its re-establishment in 2017, the Kumisión has searched for adequate space to carry out its operations. Initially, the Kumisión met at the Guam Museum and the University of Guam in available conference rooms, as we had no designated space of our own.

In 2018, an MOU with the 34th Guam Legislature allowed the historic Garden House at the Plaza de España in Hagåtña to become our base of operations. Unfortunately, plumbing issues and major leaks causing mold and other health hazards forced the Kumisión to vacate the Garden House. The Garden House was entirely too small to house both the Revitalization Center and office operations, but it was ideally situated in the heart of Hagåtña. The Board will continue to pursue a permanent, government-owned location in a visible, easily accessible location in Hagåtña.





# I FONDON-MĀMI

Through ARPA and ESF funding, the Kumisión was able to relocate to its current site at the Bell Tower Building in Aniguak in September of 2022. Our current headquarters of 3,350 square feet houses a small recording studio, an all-purpose workroom, a board room, and staff offices.

A more spacious, permanent facility will allow us to fully operationalize our CHamoru Revitalization Center, training rooms, a dedicated area for i Kunité i Na’an Lugát, an archives and research room, a genealogy lab, an enlarged multimedia production studio, and meeting spaces for CHamoru experts and interns. Such a location will enable the Kumisión to expand the footprint of CHamoru revitalization efforts throughout our island community and within all educational institutions.



General Funds Requested and Authorized by Fiscal Year		
Fiscal Year	Requested Budget	Authorized Budget
FY 2017-2018	\$620,432	\$230,000
FY 2018-2019	\$467,900	\$202,200
FY 2019-2020	\$664,310	\$452,200
FY 2020-2021	\$601,019	\$454,534
FY 2021-2022	\$472,685	\$454,534
FY 2022-2023	\$472,685	\$454,534
FY 2023-2024	\$640,787	\$489,637

Federal Funds Awarded to the Kumisión							
Funding	FY 2017 - 2018	FY 2018 - 2019	FY 2019 - 2020	FY 2020 - 2021	FY 2021 - 2022	FY 2022 - 2023	FY 2023 - 2024
American Rescue Plan (ARPA)					\$465,412.00	\$440,932.17	\$266,310.58
ANA Preservation & Maintenance					\$299,075.00	\$521,463.94	\$297,425.00
ANA Native Language (ARP)					\$311,939.00	Carryover	Carryover
Educational Stabilization Fund (ESF)					\$890,014.33	Carryover	
Humanities Guåhan Grant				\$10,000.00			



# I FONDON-MÅMI



## AMERICAN RECOVERY PLAN ACT (ARPA)

Award #: 5682C210672AR301  
Award Date: 9/2021, 10/2022, 10/2023  
Budget Period Date: 10/1/2021 - 9/30/2024

DESCRIPTION: In reference to the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF), a part of the American Rescue Plan, the Kumisión was allocated three separate sums as part of the Federal Government's efforts to ensure that state and local governments have the resources needed to:

*"Fight the pandemic and support families and businesses struggling with its public health and economic impacts. Maintain vital public services, even amid declines in revenue; and build a strong, resilient, and equitable recovery by making investments that support long-term growth and opportunity."*

Similar to all other Government of Guam agencies, the Kumisión suffered significant blows to its normal operation. Many CHamoru elders whose knowledge of our indigenous language and cultural practices died due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Tourism came to a standstill, our source of operating revenue, the Tourist Attraction Fund, literally dried up overnight. Our daily operations were severely curtailed as a result of the shutdown.

The urgent mandates of the Kumisión could not be implemented in this context. The infusion of much-needed funds through SLFRF allowed us to resume services to the public.



## EDUCATION STABILIZATION FUND (ESF)

Award #: S425H210004  
Award Date: 1/13/2021  
Budget Period Date: 8/09/2021 to 9/30/2023

DESCRIPTION: The Office of the Governor of Guam sub-granted funds from 'Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act - Education Stabilization Funds (ESF) -- Governor Allocation for Outlying Areas, under the local program entitled 'Governor's Education Assistance and Youth Empowerment Grant Program (GEAYEGP)', to promote and support student engagement opportunities for Guam's public, private, and charter school students, while addressing the need to prepare, prevent, and respond to COVID-19.

To this end, the Kumisión engaged CHamoru experts, interns, and community members in developing learning tools to mitigate learning gaps caused by program shutdowns and school closures as a result of the pandemic. New school requirements regarding space caused the Kumisión to relocate with assistance from ESF funding.



## ADMINISTRATION OF NATIVE AMERICANS (ANA) FUNDING ANA AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (ARP)

Award #: 90XN0221-01-00  
Award Date: 9/01/2021  
Budget Period Date: 9/01/2021 to 9/29/2024  
Project Title: *A Sustainable Framework for Teaching and Learning CHamoru*  
"Nina' fitmen i Fina' nã' guen i Historia yan Lina' la' i Taotao Tãno'

DESCRIPTION: Research data in the past three decades reveal that the CHamoru language is no longer being effectively transmitted intergenerationally. The rupture in intergenerational transmission has been further complicated by the practice of hiring fluent speakers without teacher training or certified educators who are not fluent speakers to provide CHamoru instruction in Guam's schools. The Kumisión seeks to redirect this downward trajectory by creating a sustainable framework for teaching and learning fluency and proficiency in CHamoru at home and at school. This project allows us to build much-needed teaching capacity; develop community capacity to support language learning in families through intergenerational speaking and language nesting strategies; and enhance CHamoru literacy among adult CHamoru speakers and passive bilinguals to grow fluency and proficiency at all levels in the community.

## ANA PRESERVATION AND MAINTENANCE

Award #: 90NL0681-01-00  
Award Date: 9/29/2021  
Budget Period Date: 9/30/2021 to 6/30/2024

DESCRIPTION: The goal of this project was to develop the language foundation for a dual language school model for Guåhan in partnership with Saint Francis Catholic School (SCS) and to engage in an ongoing effort to assist in sustaining the use of CHamoru in the classroom across all grade levels and in all subject areas.



## HUMANITIES GUÅHAN

Award #: HG-2020-03\_R  
Award Date: 10/30/2020  
Budget Period Date: 10/31/2020 to 10/31/2021  
Project Title: *Ginen i Matan i Mañaina-ta: Rinikohen Tiningo' yan Sinangan Siha CHamoru Cultural Resource Book of Significant Concepts and Sayings*

DESCRIPTION: This award funded the services of writers, CHamoru translators and a graphic artist in the production of Volume I of the Cultural Dictionary developed by the Kumisión.



# I MAGA' PLĀNU

The Kumisión seeks to revitalize the CHamoru language, history, and culture through the following Strategic Priorities:

- A** Language Revitalization Initiatives and Facilitation Tools
- B** Language, Culture, and History Education and Outreach
- C** Marketing of Services
- D** Expansion of Archive and Resource Library
- E** Partnerships, Networks, Internships, and Advisory Council
- F** Translation Services
- G** Publications/Printing and Development of Learning Resources

All the Kumisión’s projects and programs are aligned with one of our seven priorities, our legal mandates and our nation-building and revitalization mission. Our projects are designed to facilitate community access. We are dedicated to creating new resources, identifying, documenting, and maintaining existing multimedia materials as well as developing and building the infrastructure for future generations to enhance their understanding of our indigenous history, language, and cultural ethos.

# HINAGO'

## LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION INITIATIVES AND FACILITATION TOOLS

Priority Goal A focuses on creating tools that will make learning Fino' CHamoru easier and more accessible to the public as part of our strategy for revitalization. To accomplish this goal, we are producing print and electronic media materials to facilitate the learning and speaking of the CHamoru language for all age groups across fluency and proficiency levels. In this modern world of technology, many of these tools serve as the first of their kind. We provide such resources to increase the number of CHamoru language speakers and address the demand for CHamoru learning tools that are orthographically aligned and culturally accurate.

Deliverables:

- Create multimedia products as language-learning tools
- Develop CHamoru spell-check software
- Develop CHamoru computer keyboard
- Facilitate language learning by creating spaces and opportunities for new learners



# Ti Atrasásao

## A REVITALIZATION CAMPAIGN

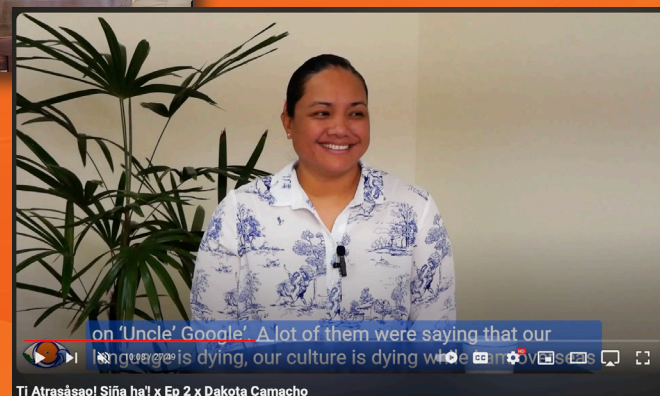


Ti Atrasásao is an urgent call out to those who want to speak CHamoru but have not because they feel intimidated, get embarrassed when making mistakes, and do not have speaking parents who can create the language nest. This is so critical to sustained learning and speaking. There are other reasons, but these are the most often cited. The Kumisión has launched a campaign to encourage passive speakers and future learners that it is never too late! A series of products and activities are planned as part of this effort.

Personal testimonies are a powerful source of inspiration for doing something that seems impossible. So, we launched this campaign with a series of video interviews featuring second language learners of Fino' CHamoru. They share their language journeys and best practices for overcoming the obstacles they have encountered. Some videos are available on the Kumisión's YouTube channel and other social media platforms. To view the episodes, scan the QR Code.

Several slogans have also been developed to promote awareness about "Saving the CHamoru Language."

Additionally, a collection of written testimonies, poems, and artwork will be published in a book entitled, *Ti Atrasásao: It's Not Too Late!* as part of this campaign.



# Nina'dinanchen Dinilitreha

## CHAMORU LANGUAGE SPELL-CHECK SOFTWARE AND KEYBOARD

The Kumisión aims to engage a partner in developing a software program that will spell-check text in CHamoru. This project is designed to encourage the creation of written resources in the CHamoru language since users will be able to write creatively without errors in orthographic alignment. A corresponding keyboard featuring the CHamoru alphabet and symbols is envisioned.



KEYBOARD MOCKUP

SPELL-CHECK APP MOCKUP



# Faneyåkan Siha

## VIRTUAL CHAMORU LANGUAGE LEARNING

Faneyåkan Siha is designed as a collaborative project with community partners like *umeyakchamoru.com* to create virtual learning opportunities for those who want to learn to speak, read, and write in CHamoru or deepen their knowledge of CHamoru culture and history.

The Kumisión will continue to generate these resources which can be accessed through our website. You can also access these collabortative resources by simply creating an account on *umeyakchamoru.com* or by scanning the QR Codes below.

### 5.2. Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral Basilica



#### 5. Hagåtña Heritage Walking Trail

Dr. Laura M. Torres Souder, Kumision i Fino' CHamoru member and Guam Historian tells us about the Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral Basilica in Hagåtña. Siñora Rosa Palomo reads the vocabulary drills related to the heritage site description. We invite you to learn about the history of Guam and *enJOY* learning CHamoru at the same time.

This description of the Cathedral Basilica, written and narrated by Dr. Souder and translated by Anna Marie Blas Arceo, the Kumision's Administrator, is part of the project "Learning CHamoru - Discovering Guam's History" which received partial funding from the Guam Preservation Trust and the Commission on CHamoru Language.

We thank Dr. Laura M. Torres Souder, Mrs. Anna Marie Blas Arceo and Siñora Rosa Palomo for their valuable contributions to this project, Si Yu'os Ma'åse'.

Laura M. Torres Souder, Ph.D.




### 2. What Is Your Name?

#### Possessive Pronouns | Singular: -hu, -mu, -ña

In this lessons we continue to practice greetings and we learn simple who-questions.

We thank Rosa Palomo, Louis Waboi (picture), and Sr. Bernadette Quintanilla SSND for the recordings of their voices; and John I skill test for this lesson.



#### Dialogue

##### What is Your Name? - Håyi i Na'ån-mu?

Two women are waiting in the arrival area of the Guam International Airport; they start a brief introductory conversation.

Rosa S. Palomo (photo) Sr. Bernadette Quintanilla SSND and Louis Waboi for writing and reading this dialogue and drills for our website.

This dialogue is used in Lesson 1 and in the Dialog Learning Path.

... *enJOY Learning Chamorro*

Håfa Adai.

Håyi i na'ån-mu?

Señora Rosa S. Palomo

Audio Practice

### 5.1. Chief Quipuha - Maga'låhi Kepuha

#### 5. Hagåtña Heritage Walking Trail



Dr. Robert A. Underwood, former delegate from Guam to the United States House of Representatives and president of the University of Guam is our "tour guide" to the Chief Quipuha Park in Hagåtña. Siñora Rosa Palomo reads the vocabulary drills related to the heritage site description. We invite you to learn about the history of Guam and *enJOY* learning CHamoru at the same time.

This description of Chief Quipuha is part of the project "Learning CHamoru - Discovering Guam's History" which received partial funding from the Guam Preservation Trust and the Commission on CHamoru Language.

We thank Dr. Robert Underwood and Siñora Rosa Palomo for their valuable contributions to this project, Si Yu'os ma'åse'.

Robert A. Underwood

Audio Practice



# Tinaitai yan Kanta Siha

## PRAYERS AND SONGS AS LANGUAGE TOOLS

CHamoru prayers and songs comprise the most comprehensive collection of written CHamoru in the historical record. Many of these prayers and songs were documented by Spanish priests, among them Pålë'Roman de Vera in the early 1900s. They used the Spanish language spelling canon of the period.

Novenas and songs are priceless resources containing rich metaphors and samples of the most sophisticated and eloquent forms of CHamoru language use. The Kumisión has initiated a long-term project to collect and orthographically align existing songs and prayers as learning tools and for preservation and archival purposes.





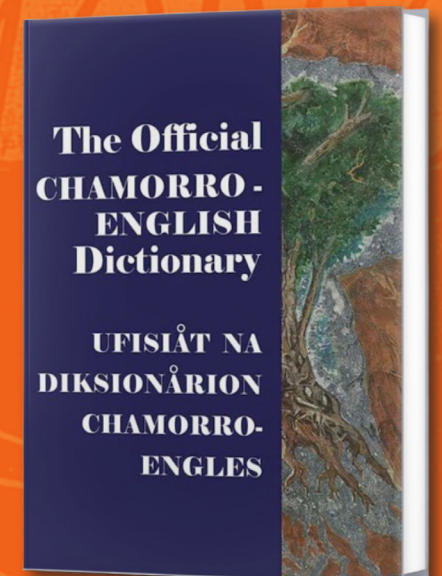
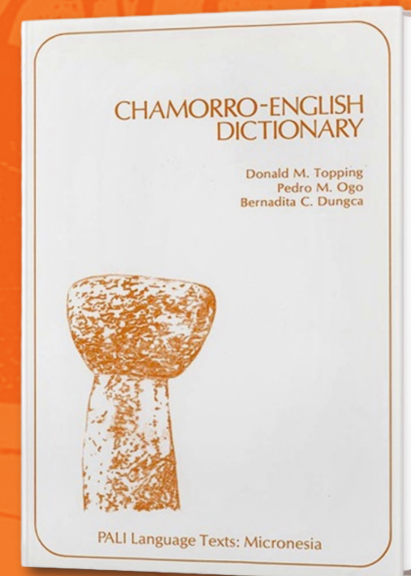
## WORD OF THE DAY

[illegible]

Kootiba  
 Palabra gi Fino' CHamoru  
 To charm or fascinate  
 Palabra gi Fino' English  
 Hu deseseha no bai kootiba kurason-mu.  
 Singangan gi Fino' CHamoru  
 I am hoping to charm your heart.  
 Singangan gi Fino' English

# CHAMORU WORD FINDER

The database will feature CHamoru root words and their most popular affixed forms. Each entry will be defined. Examples of use will also be provided. As new words are added to our lexicon, they will be incorporated into the database as a community resource. All words in the Listan Palåbra Word-Finder database will be orthographically aligned using the *Utugrafihan CHamoru, Guåhan*.





# Kumité i Na'an Lugát

## COMMITTEE ON PLACE NAMES

Indigenous CHamoru place names contain cultural, historical, and environmental information that reveal much about our people's relationship to place over time. As place names are forgotten or replaced, important historical knowledge that can support our efforts to reclaim and reinforce the CHamoru heritage are lost forever. In order to advance the cause of CHamoru revitalization and cultural self-determination, the Kumisión has for many years made a concerted effort to advocate for the perpetuation of indigenous place names. When the Guåhan Legislature enacted Public Law 33-236, the Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru was also charged with serving as the Kumisión i Na'an Lugát (Guam Place Name Commission).

The duties and responsibilities outlined in the Guam Code Annotated Section 88105 (l) and (m) provide legal support to the efforts of the Kumisión to revive, reinforce, and perpetuate the CHamoru language and culture through place naming. In CHamoru culture, the first two questions asked of someone you just met are "Håyi familia-mu?" (Who is your family?) and "Taotao amānu hao?" (What place are you from?). This is the framework through which the strongest sense of cultural identity and belonging is supported. Family is first, but place comes as a close second.

The Kumisión oversees and approves all of the proposed changes, alterations, or re-naming of place names in Guåhan through the Kumité i Na'an Lugát. The current committee members are Dr. Robert Underwood (Chair), Teresita Flores, Jimmy Teria, and Hope Cristobal. The work of the Kumisión is based on the following principles:

1. To the greatest extent possible, identify and revive original CHamoru place names for Guåhan
2. Secure the input of experienced village informants on relevant place names in their respective villages
3. Conduct public conversations on place names and provide the opportunity for the general public to make comments on existing place names and proposed changes

While the Kumisión has been charged with the restoration of indigenous place names, there are limits to their jurisdiction. The Kumisión has no formal role in deciding the names of roads, schools, villages, or the boundaries between municipalities. Public facilities or named areas like parks are usually designated by the Guam Legislature. The Kumisión cannot rename Joseph Flores Park in Ipao. But it can recommend that Ypao should no longer be the place name where Joseph Flores Park is located.

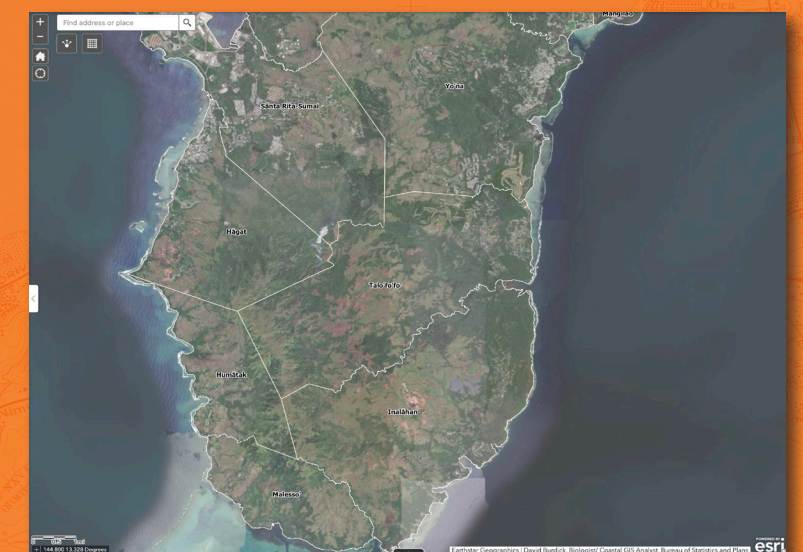
The Kumisión does however have jurisdiction over rivers and streams, summits, area/locale, springs/water basins, beaches, bays, valleys, capes/points, planned unit developments, and commonly-used names. This is consistent with the use of the term "geographical feature" as used by the Board of Geographic Names (BGN) of the US Geological Survey.

# Dinilitrehan yan Sinangan i Na'an Lugát Siha

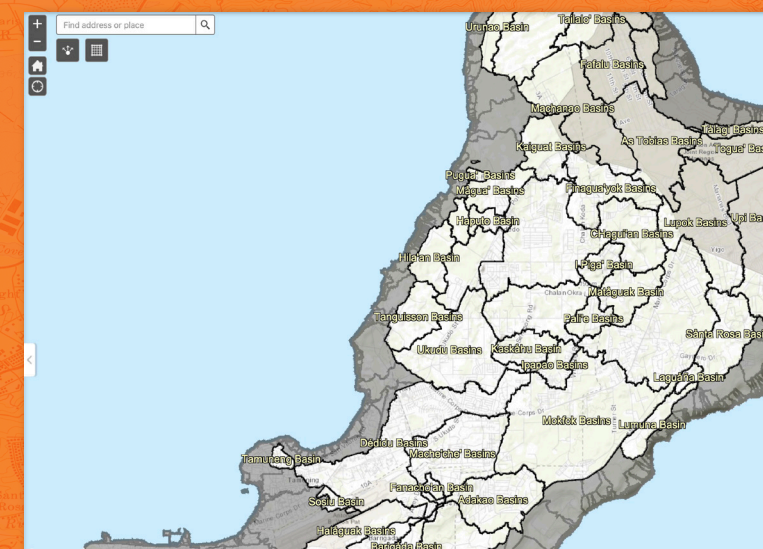
## SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION OF PLACE NAMES

Over the centuries, actual spelling of place names in Guåhan has been based on different spelling systems from colonial languages. The end result has been a lack of consistency as well as changes in the pronunciation of the original CHamoru place names. Confusion in spelling of the same sound can be seen in Ipan and Ypao as well as Maimai and Sumay, wherein the same sound is spelled differently.

The greater problem has been the mispronunciation of place names over the centuries. This is most evident in places like Tomhom (not Tumon) and Otdot (not Ordot). It used to be true for Hagåtña when it was referred to as Agana. The Kumité will continue to tap the wisdom of our elders and knowledgeable sources regarding place naming. Scan the QR Code for full maps of Municipalities and Water Basins.



Guam Villages-Municipalities  
CHamoru Place Names



Limestone Plateau Basins of Northern Guam





# Na'an i Sengsong yan Otro Lugát Siha

## VILLAGE NAMES AND OTHER PLACES

The naming of villages (municipalities) resides with the Guam Legislature since those are political jurisdictions which have boundaries and affect legal documents, residence, voting, and government benefits. While the Kumisión does not have authority over the names of villages, the Legislature decides what to call political jurisdictions. However, the Kumisión does have authority over the orthography (the spelling) of those names.

On April 13, 2021 the Kumisión conducted their first Public Hearing in which they shared their findings and recommendations with the public. Following the approval of the community and the village mayors, the Kumisión recommended to the Legislature to officially change the names of the southern villages to Malesso', Inaláhan, Humatak, Talo'fo'fo', Santa Rita-Sumai, and Hågat. The Legislature has officially approved the changes to the spelling of these villages.

Four additional public hearings were held in May, June, and November of 2021 to discuss village names. The Kumisión will make recommendations to the Legislature once acknowledgments from the respective mayors are received.

In addition to the names of the villages, the Kumisión has also been working on identifying names of places within each of the villages. Efforts started with approximately 1,321 place names as recorded in "A Glossary of Guamanian Place Names Located by Land Square Section & Unit" prepared by the Survey Division of the Department of Land Management in 1945. The list has also been supplemented with additional place names by collaborating with other interested community members, researchers, and village informants. Kumisión staff are meeting with village informants to identify and corroborate traditional place names that are being put on village maps. They are simultaneously documenting stories about places named. The plan is to continue these endeavors and review findings with village Municipal Councils.

The Kumisión will eventually work with the BGN, Apple Maps, and Google Maps to have traditional place names visible on digital devices. The Kumisión also plans to partner with UOG Press to provide accurate maps for a future mapping project.



# Sagan Finamta'

## RECORDING STUDIO

Launched in 2019, our recording studio at Tiyan was functional for a short time prior to COVID. We were able to produce the *Fanminatáyan Video Series* and record interviews with Guåhan Vietnam veterans for a project with the United States Veterans Administration. Unfortunately, We were not able to sustain operations due to the pandemic restrictions, which forced us to shut our doors.



Subsequently, in October 2022, the Kumisión moved to a new location at the Bell Tower building in Aniguak. We were able to reconstruct another recording studio at our current site. Since then, production has been ongoing for *Ti Atrasåso*, *Linakngos Linakse'*, *Fino' i Ha'ani*, and other multimedia projects.





# Giha Mås Mo'na

## REVITALIZATION STUDY

The Kumisión recruited the services of Dr. Kenneth Gofigan Kuper in 2020-2021 to conduct a language revitalization study that addressed and recommended a path forward for revitalization efforts. The scope of the study was to address:

- A ) Transmission of language
- B ) Resource development and training
- C ) Archive of CHamoru language
- D ) Role of language

To accomplish this goal, Dr. Kuper divided the language revitalization study into three distinct sections. The first section of the study served as an introduction to the primary issues being discussed throughout the document and articulated the operational definition of terms to be used. An introduction to the CHamoru language included the linguistic classification of the language, the history of language loss, the history of language policy in Guåhan, and a discussion of the language's current state.

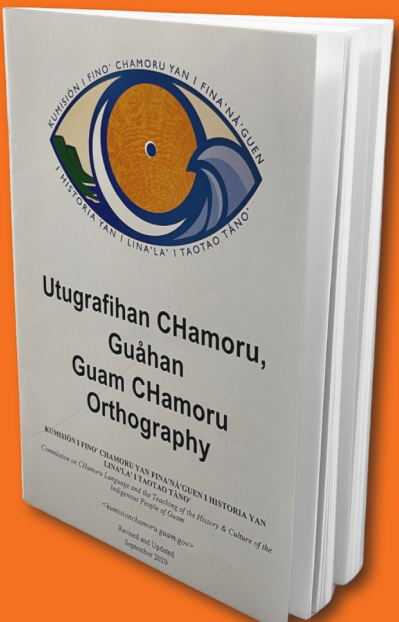
Additionally, an overview of language endangerment, language vitality factors, and language revitalization was provided to situate Fino' CHamoru in the global conversation on language revitalization. The study is available on our website. You can access it directly by scanning the QR Code.



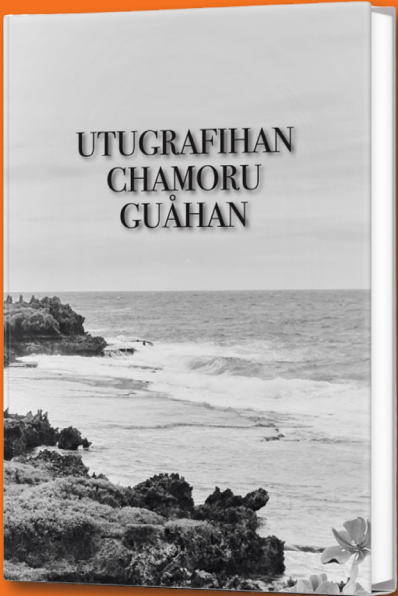
# Utugrafihan CHamoru, Guåhan

## CHAMORU ORTHOGRAPHY GUIDES 2020 & 2024

Standardizing the spelling and writing of CHamoru is essential for building proficiency and fluency; and, for teaching CHamoru as a second language in the classroom. The Kumisión updated the 1983 CHamoru Orthography and presented their work in booklet form in 2020. The release of our 2024 version of a user-friendly update of the *Utugrafihan CHamoru, Guåhan* is timely as growing numbers of those interested in reading and writing in CHamoru are clamoring for both print and digital resources and guidance. These include CHamoru teachers, learners in Guåhan as well as throughout the diaspora. The latest version of the orthography is online and can be downloaded from the Kumisión website.



2020



2024



# Fanminatāyan

## VIDEO EXHIBITION SERIES

The Kumisión entered into a partnership with Guam PBS to promote and present:

- 1) The history and creation of the CHamoru Language Commission;
- 2) The origin and the history of the word CH-A-M-O-R-U;
- 3) Instruction on the 17 rules of spelling in CHamoru with examples and vignettes on CHamoru Culture

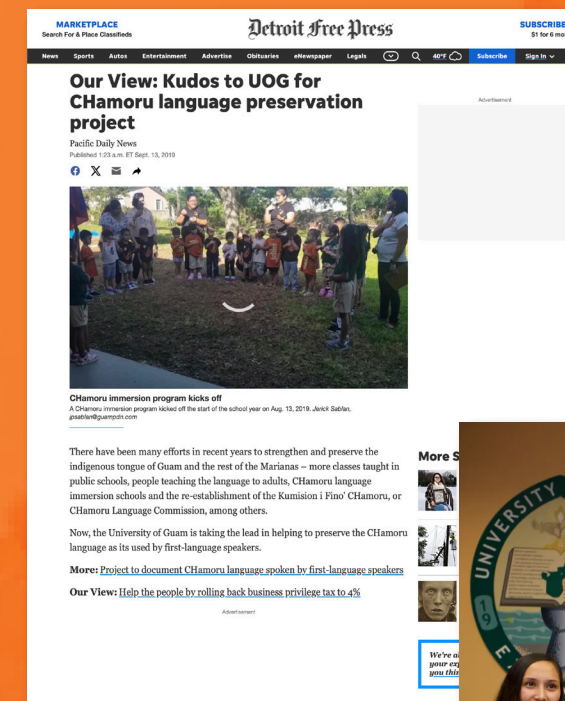
The project included the production and public broadcasting of twenty-four, 30 minute segments on PBS Guam, KGTG Channel 12.



# Proyekton NSF

## NSF PROJECT

The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) at the University of Guam (UOG) was awarded a National Science Foundation Endangered Languages Grant. The Kumisión agreed to partner with CLASS to assist in identifying individuals in the community to interview. Kumisión member Dr. Robert A. Underwood served as the co-principal Investigator with Dr. David Ruskin, Assistant Professor in Linguistics at UOG. The grant was awarded from August 2019 through July 2022 with a two-year extension due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The grant concludes in July 2024. To access the full article from the Detroit Free Press scan the QR Code provided.





# HINAGO'

## LANGUAGE, CULTURE, AND HISTORY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Priority Goal B focuses on developing and showcasing educational materials and outreach activities. This goal is being addressed through a diverse range of educational platforms and projects in curriculum development, face-to-face and online training, bilingual podcasts, multimedia products developed from interviews with experts, conferences, workshops, symposia, and other outreach events.

The Kumisión is also committed to growing the cultural and linguistic competencies of our staff and developing a network of historically and culturally informed younger champions who will take over the reins of this important work in the years ahead. To this end, we support the participation of board members, staff, CHamoru experts, and interns in professional development opportunities.

There are different audiences and many levels of interest in the CHamoru language, culture, and history. Our aim is to reach a wide range of interests and age cohorts.

### Deliverables:

- Develop podcast episodes about CHamoru language, history, and culture
- Conduct trainings in place-based curriculum
- Facilitate school visits/presentations
- Support professional development
- Provide language workshops
- Attend and present at national and international language conferences

# Linakngos Linakse'

## PODCASTS AND RECORDINGS OF FLUENT SPEAKERS

This project seeks to archive spoken CHamoru and to document the knowledge and expertise of fluent speakers. We also plan to feature podcasts on cultural values, customs and traditions, historical events, and language learning issues and challenges.





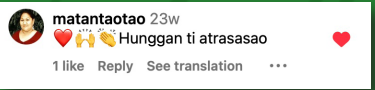
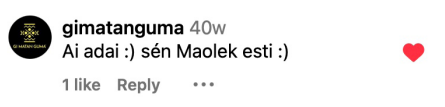
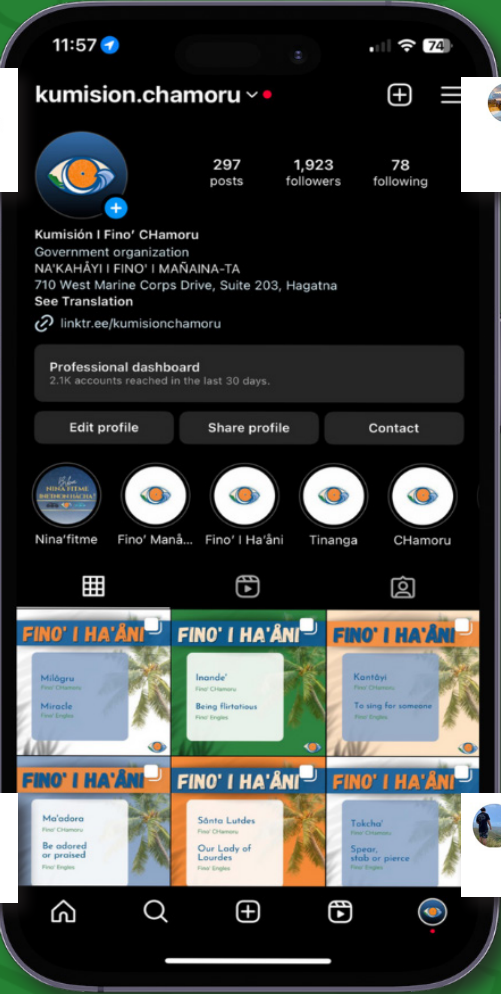
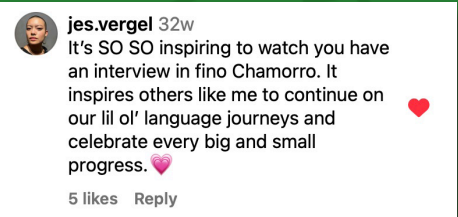
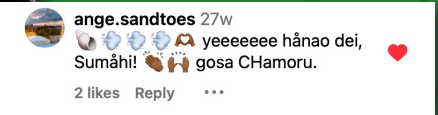
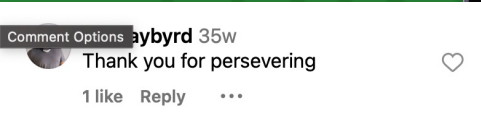
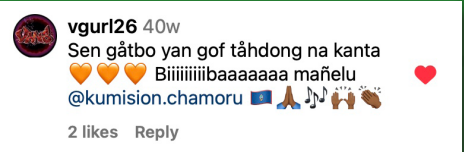
# Finattan CHamoru

## SOCIAL MEDIA

As we strive to reach audiences on island and throughout the diaspora, we are committed to generating culturally relevant, accurate representations and products that are being disseminated through our social media platforms.

Over the course of the last year, our Instagram account has gained around 2,000 new followers. Our viewership spans across the Mariana Islands, Japan, and the United States, indicating a significant level of engagement locally as well as from off-island. Some of our most popular posts have garnered a range of 3000 to 8000 views.

We also post announcements, invitations, and value the feedback we receive. QR Codes to all our platforms are provided at the end of this report.





# Settifikon Nina' fitmen Progrãman Sinipok CHamoru

## NINA' FITME CHAMORU IMMERSION CERTIFICATE

In partnership with Chief Hurao Academy, UOG, GCC, GDOE's CSSP/ Faneyåkan, and Eskuelan Mañaina, the Kumisión developed a certificate program in immersion techniques and teaching CHamoru as a language art. The certificate program of 12-credit hours of coursework was designed to provide much-needed professional development for teachers of the CHamoru language in instruction methodology and immersion techniques. Teachers learn new models and teaching methodologies. Classes are conducted in CHamoru. Funding was secured through an ANA grant for scholarships for a total of 60 teachers in four cohorts. The first cohort completed their certificate requirements at the end of 2023. The other three cohorts are in progress. The Kumisión will seek additional funding to support this project with teacher scholarships.



*Inetnon Håcha*



*Inetnon Hugua*



*Inetnon Tulu*



*Inetnon Fåtfat*







# Mudelon i Eskuelan Dos Lengguåhi

## SAINT FRANCIS DUAL LANGUAGE SCHOOL MODEL

In July 2020, the Kumisión partnered with Saint Francis Catholic School (SFCS) in Yo'ña to apply for a three-year Administration for Native Americans (ANA) grant to build the framework for a viable dual language model for Guam schools. The purpose of this endeavor is to facilitate CHamoru speaking and usage in the classroom and other spaces and to engage teachers, staff, and parents to create a supportive and rich CHamoru learning environment in the school setting. The Kumisión will seek additional funding to support this pilot program after the grant ends in the summer of 2024.



Visit by Rosia Tavita-Curry (ANA Grant Senior Program Specialist) to Saint Francis School with Kumisión Gé'helo' and Sikritària

**Dr. Lisa Baza-Cruz, Principal**  
Eskuelan Katolikon San Fransisko  
Saint Francis Catholic School

**Welcomes to Saint Francis Catholic School, where learning academic knowledge and Christian faith come alive in both English and Chamorro languages.**

**We love you all and encourage you to make good choices.**

**It's a joy to have you here and thank God for every day we can learn and learn together.**

**Ya-hu mama'na' gao! I encourage you to be a good person.**

**I love to teach my students because I keep learning and I keep growing as a person.**

**Ya-hu = I like to ... I love to ...**  
**ta'ud gao = teach**  
**mama'na' gao = teaching, to teach**  
**estudiante = student**  
**estudiante aha = students**  
**sa' = because**  
**ta'ngao = know**  
**na'ngao = cause to know, learn**  
**mananungao = learning**  
**mananungao = keep learning**  
**na'ngao = causes to keep learning**  
**yo' = I, me**  
**yan = and**  
**ha = he, she, it**  
**maale = good, well**  
**na' maaleale = keep making good**  
**ma = more**  
**komu = as**  
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Elementary School Teacher  
Eskuelan Katolikon San Fransisko  
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**ta'ud gao = teach**  
**mama'na' gao = teaching, to teach**  
**estudiante = student**  
**estudiante aha = students**  
**sa' = because**  
**ta'ngao = know**  
**na'ngao = cause to know, learn**  
**mananungao = learning**  
**mananungao = keep learning**  
**na'ngao = causes to keep learning**  
**yo' = I, me**  
**yan = and**  
**ha = he, she, it**  
**maale = good, well**  
**na' maaleale = keep making good**  
**ma = more**  
**komu = as**  
**ta'ao = person**

**Mrs. Magdalena Guerrero**  
Elementary School Teacher  
Eskuelan Katolikon San Fransisko  
Saint Francis Catholic School

**Ya-hu mama'na' gao! I encourage you to be a good person.**

**I love to teach my students because I keep learning and I keep growing as a person.**

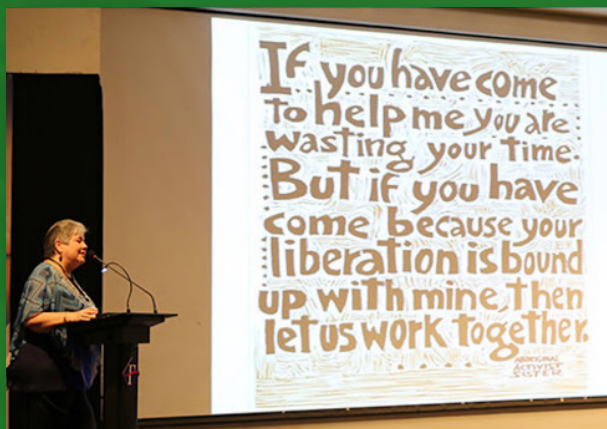
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# Finattan Tiningo'

## CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND FESTIVALS

Sponsorship and participation in forums that explore and report research on language, history, and culture are a viable means of showcasing the rich linguistic, cultural, and historic knowledge of Kumisión board members and the growing network of CHamoru Experts with whom we collaborate at various venues. To this end, the Kumisión leverages opportunities to attend and participate in such events and activities.



# Fina'någuen i Utugrafiha

## ORTHOGRAPHY TRAINING

The Kumisión has conducted numerous in-depth training sessions on the orthography with CHamoru teachers, government representatives and interested members of the community. We also produced a 24-part television series entitled, *Fanminatåyan*, which was broadcasted on PBS Guam.

Sessions on the 2024 Edition of the *Utugrafiha CHamoru, Guåhan* are being planned for GDOE CHamoru teachers this summer. We are also developing lesson plans and activities for teaching the orthography to K-12 grade students in the classroom. These tools will be made available in digital format for teacher and community access.





# Dinanña' Put i Fino' Taotao Tāno' Siha

## INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE SUMMIT

A two-day Summit was held at the Leo Palace Resort on February 10 and 11, 2023. The theme of the event was “Ti Atrasāsao” – “It’s Never Too Late!”

The Indigenous Language Summit was co-sponsored by the Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru, University of Guam, Young Men’s League of Guam, and the Pacific Indigenous Women’s Network. The Kumisión portion of the sponsorship was paid for by The Office of the Governor through the Educational Stablization Fund (ESF), Grant Number S425H21004.

Attendees included CHamoru teachers, CHamoru language champions and students from Guam and CNMI, and indigenous language advocates from the Pacific region including Hawaii, Aotearoa, American Samoa and our neighbors in Micronesia.

Island leaders from across the Pacific presented as keynoters and panel participants.

The Kumisión honored Dr. Katherine Bordallo Aguon for her lifetime achievements as a CHamoru language champion with the Rikuetdon Finayi', Tinemtom yan Setbisiu Award.



The University of Guam’s *Island Wisdom* program sponsored a welcome dinner and ceremony at Santos Beach Park entitled, “Traditional Seafaring as a Mechanism of Language Transmission” featuring Master Navigators Larry Reigetal and Melissa Taitano with apprentices (Annie Faye Camacho, Boyka Mark, Atdao Natividad, Isaiah Yarofyan-instructor aide) and Catherine Murupaenga-Ikenn and Jef Ikenn (Aotearoa).



Dihia Dos ~ Day 2	
8-8:30AM	Rihestración ~ Registration
8:30-8:50AM	Rikuetdon Finayi, Tinemtom yan Setbisiu para si Doktora Katherine Bordallo Aguon Award Presentation
8:50-9:50AM	I Mina'dos Na Inaang ~ Keynote Address Dr. Rita Alden Seblan Facilitador ~ Moderator: Dr. Robert A. Underwood
9:50-11:10AM	PANEL 4: Innovative Community Approaches for Sustaining Indigenous Languages Teresta C. Flores, Rita Guerrero, Leo Pangellinan, Elijah Reyes Facilitador ~ Moderator: Melvin Won-Pai Bora
11:10-11:25AM	Deskáno ~ BREAK
11:25-12:25PM	Panel 5: Faneykkan: Dual Language Education Jonas Manibusan Bactinas, Dr. Lisa Bass Cruz, Alty, Milliani Trask Facilitadora ~ Moderator: Hope A. Cristobal
12:25-1:30PM	Na'-talo' In ~ LUNCH
1:30-2:45PM	Panel 6: Faneykkan: Immersion Pedagogy Educational Programs Anna Marie Blas Arco, Rufina F. Mendola, Hema Wihongi Facilitador ~ Moderator: Jimmy S. Teria
2:45-3:45PM	FINATTA: I Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru Nā'an Lugā, GIHA, Projects
3:45-5:00PM	PANEL 7: Para Amānu Hā Mo'na? Policy Implications and Moving Forward Akto Maga'ŭhi Joshua Francisco Tenorio, Kukuento Therese Terlaja, Vice-President Dr. Gerald S. A. Perez, Guam Visitor's Bureau; Dr. Mary A. Y. Chada, Chairwoman of the Guam Education Board Facilitadora ~ Moderator: Dr. Laura M. Torres Souder

I Mandanña! Mannatlināy! Siha ~ Co-sponsored By:



Dihia Uno ~ Day 1	
8-8:30AM	Rihestración ~ Registration
8:30-9:00AM	Bendición, Infres, CNMI yan Gulhan Lāla! Siha ~ Blessing, Pledge, National Anthem Teresta C. Flores, Rāsan A'cho' Latte, Sifot Brian J. Terlaja
9:00-9:15AM	Mala' Nalōn ~ Welcoming Remarks Hope A. Cristobal, G'helo', I Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru Honorable Joshua Francisco Tenorio, Akto Maga'ŭhi, Gulhan
9:15-10:00AM	I Tānukon Na Inaang ~ Keynote Address Planning for the Future of Fino' CHamoru Revitalization in Gulhan Dr. Kenneth G. Kuper, University of Guam Facilitador ~ Moderator: Dr. Robert A. Underwood
10:00AM	Hinanao para Faneykkan Sinipok Siha (Fina'nema na Atgon) ~ Site Visit Departs (Group 1)
10:00-10:15AM	Deskáno ~ BREAK
10:15-11:15AM	Panel 1: Paella Strategies Towards Language Revitalization Malia Nobrega (Hawa'i), Hema Wihongi (Aotearoa), Lynette Villagomez (CNMI) Facilitadora ~ Moderator: Dr. Lisa Linda Salas Natividad
11:15-12:15PM	Na'-talo' In ~ LUNCH Rāsan A'cho' Latte, Sifot Brian J. Terlaja Alas Dosse- Hinanao para Faneykkan Sinipok Siha (Mina'dos na Atgon) ~ 12 noon-Site Visit Departure (Group 2)
12:15-1:45PM	Panel 2: CHamoru Language Curriculum and Education Simone Bollinger, Dr. Ignacio Demapan, Rosa Salas Palomo, Jimmy S. Teria Facilitadora ~ Moderator: Dr. Kisha Quischoho Borja-Cabeo
1:45-2:00PM	Deskáno ~ BREAK
2:00-3:30PM	PANEL 3: Innovative Pedagogical Approaches for Sustaining CHamoru Language Jonas Manibusan Bactinas, Dr. Michael L. Bevacqua, Jeremy Cepeda, Dr. David Ruskin, Dr. Laura M. Torres Souder Facilitadora ~ Moderator: Rosa Salas Palomo
3:30-4:00PM	Deskáno ~ BREAK
4:00-5:00PM	TRANSITION TO UOG ISLAND WISDOM CANOE HOUSE, SANTOS BEACH PARK, PITI Island Wisdom: Traditional Seafaring as a Mechanism of Language Transmission Master Navigators Larry Reigetal & Dr. Melissa Taitano with apprentices (Annie Faye Camacho, Boyka Mark, Atdao Natividad, Isaiah Yarofyan-instructor aide) & Catherine Murupaenga-Ikenn and Jef Ikenn (Aotearoa) Sena' Welcome Dinner

2023 Indigenous Languages Summit





# Fina'che'cho yan Finattan i Disendensian i Mañaina



## CHAMORU GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

A two-day Genealogy Workshop, entitled *Fina'che'cho' yan Finattan i Disendensian i Mañaina* was held on November 11 and 12, 2022 at the Guam Community College. The event was co-sponsored by the Kumisión and Bernard Punzalan's CHamoru Genealogy Roots project. Participants were invited to share their family research as exhibits.

Another Genealogy Workshop is being planned for September 2024. For more information on the next workshop, scan the QR Code above.

# Hinenggen CHamoru CULTURAL VIGNETTES

I Kumisión i Fina' CHamoru developed the first series of cultural vignettes in 2018, to promote our indigenous pã'a' - a deeper knowledge and understanding of lina' la' CHamoru. The vignettes emphasize different CHamoru values and traditions. They are designed to be used as teaching tools by teachers and families.

The Kumisión developed the vignettes with the support of educators and students from the University of Guam's CHamoru Studies Program and the Guam Department of Education's CHamoru Studies and Special Projects Division as well as members of Guåhan's community who volunteered their time and services to make this project possible.

The cultural vignettes are aired on the Guam Legislative Channel and are available for viewing on the Kumisión Youtube channel and the Kumisión website at [kumisionchamoru.guam.gov](http://kumisionchamoru.guam.gov).

Chamoru Genealogy Workshop		
Introduction to Chamoru Genealogy		
Fina'che'cho' yan Finattan i Disendensian i Mañaina		
Program		
November 11, 2022   Day 1 (Nov 12 and November)		
8:00am	Sign-in/Welcome to Registrations	Kumisión Staff and Volunteers
9:00 am	Family Tree/Research Skills	Lila Paulina
9:15am	Foreigners, Immigrants and Ancestral Research	Chief/Head of Family
9:30am	Welcoming to Kumisión i Fina' CHamoru and Chamoru Roots	Selena Rosa Salas Palomo
9:45am	Remarks by Honored Guests	Bernard Punzalan
10:00am	History, How and Where to Start Your Genealogy Journey	Governor Louren Leon Guerrero
10:15am	Etymology and Oral History's Relationship with Genealogy	La Governor Andrew Tirona
10:30am	Break	Speaker Theresa Terfaj
10:45am	Genealogy Resources	Bernard Punzalan
11:00am	History, How and Where to Start Your Genealogy Journey	Renee Santos Staff
11:15am	Etymology and Oral History's Relationship with Genealogy	Dr. Jose
11:30am	Break	Dr. Jose
11:45am	Genealogy Resources	Dr. Jose
12:00pm	Lunch and Open Forum	Dr. Jose
12:15pm	Panel Presentation and Discussion - Bernard Punzalan, Moderator	Dr. Jose
12:30pm	Office of Vital Statistics	Dr. Jose
12:45pm	Reyes Flores Public Library	Dr. Jose
1:00pm	Guam Courts	Dr. Jose
1:15pm	Chamorro Land Trust Commission	Dr. Jose
1:30pm	Department of Land Management	Dr. Jose
1:45pm	Guam Ancestral Land Commission	Dr. Jose
2:00pm	Break	Dr. Jose
2:15pm	Kumisión i Fina' CHamoru	Dr. Jose
2:30pm	Kumisión i Fina' CHamoru	Dr. Jose
2:45 pm	Wrap-up Day 1	Dr. Jose
3:00pm		Dr. Jose





# Konferensian i Historian Mariãnas

## MARIÃNAS HISTORY CONFERENCE

The Mariãnas History Conference encourages a broad collaboration on the part of archaeologists, historians, social anthropologists and those with less academic but more general interest in the Mariãnas. It is combined effort of those in Guam and NMI to tell the many stories and engage people of this archipelago. Members of the Kumisiõn have presented at the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th conferences.



2<sup>ND</sup> MARIÃNAS HISTORY CONFERENCE



3<sup>RD</sup> MARIÃNAS HISTORY CONFERENCE



4<sup>TH</sup> MARIÃNAS HISTORY CONFERENCE



5<sup>TH</sup> MARIÃNAS HISTORY CONFERENCE

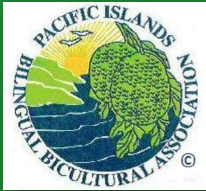
# Dinanña' Manhoben Natibu Entenasionát

## INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS YOUTH FORUM

The International Indigenous Youth Forum was established in 2012. It is composed of representatives from Indigenous communities around the world. In March of 2023, IIFYF held its meeting in Guåhan at the Pacific Island Club hotel in Tomhom. The Kumisiõn was invited to present a keynote on the social and cultural history of the CHamoru people. Youth representing the indigenous communities of Taiwan, Guåhan, and other Pacific Islands were in attendance.







# PIBBA

PACIFIC ISLANDS BILINGUAL BICULTURAL ASSOCIATION

Mandate # 3 of our enabling legislation requires the Kumisión to collaborate with the CNMI. To this end members of the Kumisión traveled to Sa'ipan to attend the 37th Annual International PIBBA conference from June 25-29, 2018. During the visit, the Kumisión met with CNMI Chamorro and Carolinian stakeholders to discuss the possibility of re-establishing and creating a unified Mariáñas CHamoru Orthography and explore regional differences.

Board members participated in a range of activities during their visit to Sa'ipan. The Kumisión has a continuing commitment to support language activities sponsored by PIBBA here in Guåhan and throughout the region.



# Inachá'igen Fino' CHamoru

CHAMORU LANGUAGE SCHOOL COMPETITION

The Inachá'igen Fino' CHamoru's competition involving students from both Guam and the CNMI is held annually at the Universtiy of Guam. It is organized by faculty from the CHamoru Studies program. The genres in the competition include poetry recitation; proficiency which includes reading comprehension, reading aloud, and oral impromptu; song and dance; and drama. CHamoru language instructor Rosa Salas Palomo and current board member of the Kumisión began the competition in 1994-1995. Since then CHamoru faculty have continued the tradition. The Kumisión has co-sponsored the annual event and board members regularly serve as judges.



The University of Guam College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) Division of Humanities, CHamoru Studies presents

## Inacha'igen Fino' CHamoru

FAÑOMNÁKAN 2023

**MARCH 13, 2023**  
UOG CLASS Lecture Hall  
12pm-6pm

**March 14, 2023**  
UOG Calvo Fieldhouse  
8am-5pm

Tema / Theme:  
**I Fino' CHamoru: Gi Mínenhalom Taotao Tāno' gi Inabiban Hinemio' yan Grásia**

THE CHAMORU LANGUAGE: THROUGH THE WISDOM OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN PRAISING HEALING AND GRACE

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT 671.735.2600 OR [UOG.GLE@TRITON.UOG.EDU](mailto:UOG.GLE@TRITON.UOG.EDU).



# HINAGO’

## MARKETING OF SERVICES

Priority Goal C focuses on the dissemination of resources and information on all the projects created and collected by the Kumisión about the CHamoru language, history, and culture. This is being accomplished through media initiatives, including but not limited to, the production of public information campaigns as well as an active and consistent social media presence.

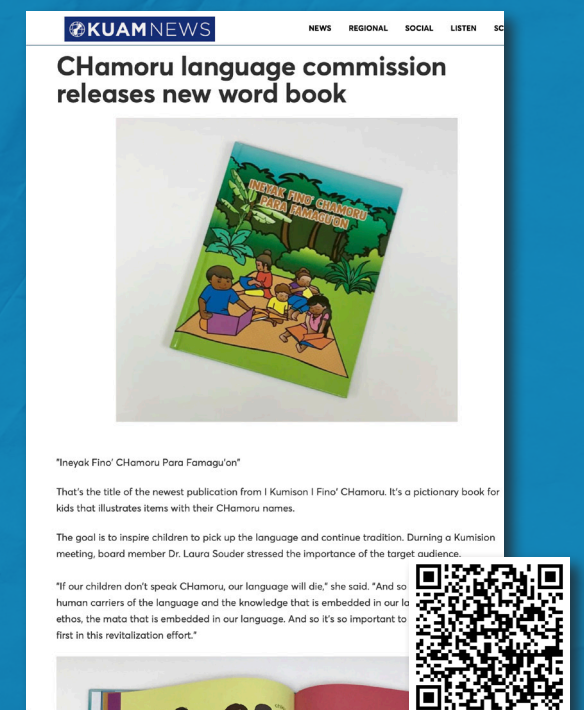
### Deliverables:

- Dissemination of Resources and Public Information Campaign
- Promotional Materials/Branding

# Ineppok Para i Púpbleku

## DISSEMINATION OF RESOURCES AND PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

The goal of this project is to execute and implement an Intergrated Marketing Strategy to support CHamoru Revitalization efforts, raise awareness of services available and communicate with the general public. The marketing strategy will allow the Kumisión to promote the various CHamoru publications, resources, and services using traditional and nontraditional mass media channels as communication lines. Television, internet, radio, newspapers, and social media will be utilized as the main platforms for dissemination of information.





# Ineppok Guinaha

## PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS AND BRANDING

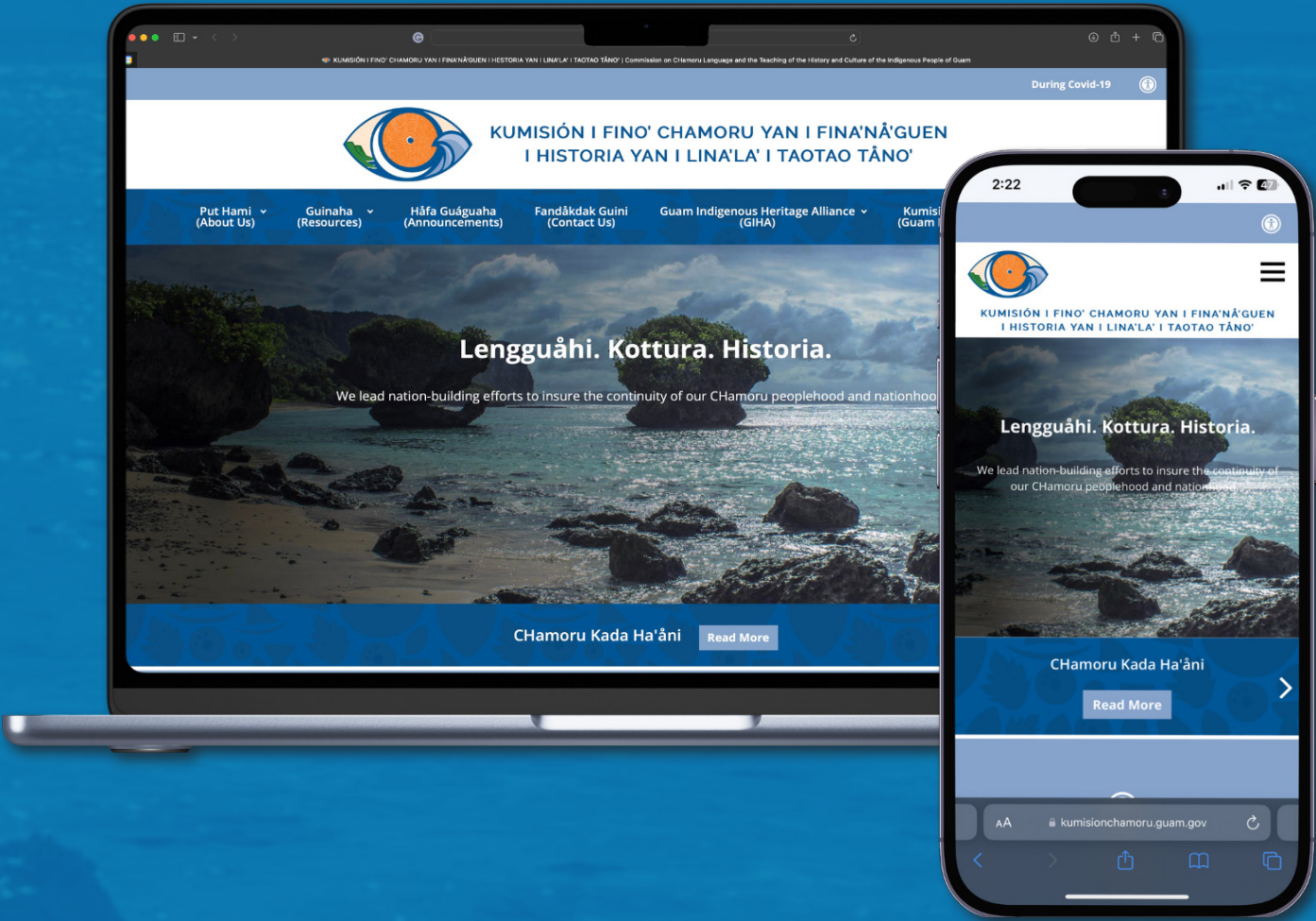
Promotional materials will be used to enhance overall marketing outreach and increase brand awareness. The Kumisión has developed banners featuring taglines. These slogans are featured in all our print and mutlimedia products as a way of building consciousness in the community relative to saving and honoring our mother tongue.



# Iyon-māmi Uebsait

## ESTABLISH KUMISIÓN WEBSITE

The Kumisión website launched in 2021. It allowed the Kumisión to share information, resources, and tools about the CHamoru language, culture and history. The management services include hosting, 24/7 monitoring, data backups, software updates and uploading posts by request. We are in the process of upgrading the website design for easier access to the growing amount of information and learning tools the Kumisión has and will continue to develop and acquire. The completely reconfigured website will also include learning resources and links to other sites that provide tools for learning CHamoru. The new and improved website will be launched in 2024.





# Na'dinanche i Dinilitrehan CHamoru

## “SPELL IT RIGHT!” STICKERS

The Kumisión printed 3,000 “Spell it Right! CH-a-m-o-r-u” Bumper Stickers in a mass effort to encourage and inform the public of the proper spelling of “CHamoru”. The orthographically correct spelling of the word CHamoru was established during the first CHamoru

CHamoru Language Commission’s tenure and first designated in the 1983 Orthography Orthography. Because it varied from the word “Chamorro,” its customary Spanish spelling, this rule is still challenged today by many reputable community advocates and educators. Hence, its inconsistent use in the past thirty-five years.

As part of its mandate to engage in CHamoru language revitalization, the current Kumisión is charged with promoting and maintaining the standard set of rules contained

in the *Utugrafihan CHamoru*, *Guåhan* to guide written CHamoru. Standardization is key key to developing written literacy in our language. The Kumisión urges government agencies, the media, public, and private organizations, educational institutions, churches, and all our island community segments to honor and uphold these orthographic rules informing the spelling of CHamoru.



# Put i Diniletrehan CHamoru

## ABOUT THE SPELLING OF CHAMORU

This term has become synonymous with the indigenous people of the Mariånas and our indigenous language, however, it does not have its roots in Fino' Håya, which is our ancestral language. It gained currency during the 1800s and has been used ever since to refer to the Taotao Tåno' and our Mother Tongue. The orthographically correct spelling of the word CHamoru was established during the tenure of the first CHamoru Language Commission and first designated as such in the 1983 Orthography. Because it varied from the customary Spanish spelling of the word Chamorro, this rule was challenged by many reputable community advocates and educators. Hence, its inconsistent use in the past four decades.

“Why CHamoru?” Why not use the spelling we have always used?” Chamorro, as a word, was first introduced into our vocabulary by the Spaniards to reference the *indios* or *nativos*. In Spanish it means bald or shorn. It is easy to see how they applied this word to the indigenous inhabitants as Spanish chroniclers documented how our male ancestors wore their hair. There is another common Spanish definition of the term which literally means, beef shank.

Our ancestors did not call themselves or their language Chamorro. It was a name given to the indigenous people and language of the Mariånas during the Spanish colonial period. As part of its mandate to engage in CHamoru language revitalization, the current Kumisión is charged with the responsibility of developing and maintaining a standard set of rules to guide written CHamoru. The Orthography is our spelling system. It is based on patterns of usage by first language speakers. The grammatical structures which have shaped our Orthography are embedded in our spoken language.

The CHamoru alphabet is different from the English alphabet. The letter “c” and “z” do not exist in CHamoru, nor does the Spanish “doble rr”. To capture the “tse” - a common sound in spoken CHamoru- the 1983 Orthography established that the combined letters “ch” would constitute one CHamoru letter representing that one sound. This is the reason that the “ch” at the beginning of the word CHamoru is always capitalized, as it is the first letter of a proper noun. CH is one letter representing one sound.

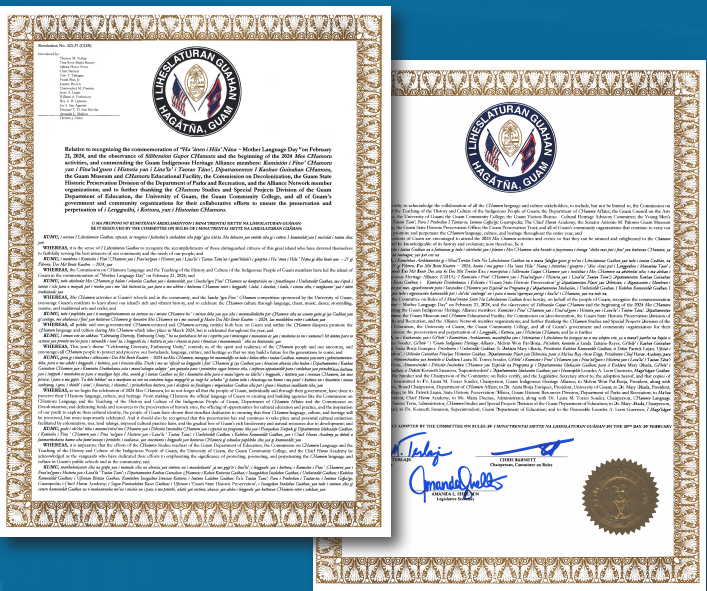
The letter “u” is used at the end of the word rather than “o”. This also reflects a pattern of speech in spoken CHamoru. Standardization is key to developing written literacy in our language. These rules have become spelling guidelines, especially for those who are learning CHamoru as a second language or for those who write in CHamoru. The CHamoru Heritage Act of 2016, which established the current Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru yan Fina'nd'guen i Historia yan i Lina'la' i Taotao Tåno', codified the spelling of CHamoru in the enabling legislation. The Kumisión urges government agencies, the media, public, and private organizations, educational institutions, churches, and all segments of our island community to honor and uphold this rule. Biba CHamoru!



# Pruklamasi3n i Ha'ānen Hila' Nāna, 21 gi Fibreru

## PROCLAMATION OF FEBRUARY 21<sup>ST</sup> AS “MOTHER TONGUE DAY”

In November 1999, UNESCO declared that February 21st would be known as International Mother Language Day and further proclaimed 2019 as the Year of Indigenous Languages. Honoring this auspicious designation, Governor Lourdes Leon Guerrero proclaimed 2019 as the Year of Indigenous Languages and February 21st as Mother Language Day through Proclamation No.2019-10 at the behest of the Kumisi3n. Every year thereafter, the Governor of Guam has proclaimed February 21st as Ha'ānen Hila' Nāna. The annual proclamation is celebrated by advocates and Chamoru language teachers and students. The Guam Legislature also recognizes the significance of this annual celebration through a Legislative Resolution.



First Proclamation designating February 21st as  
Ha'ānen Hila' Nāna in 2019



Proclamation designating February 21st as  
Ha'ānen Hila' Nāna in 2024



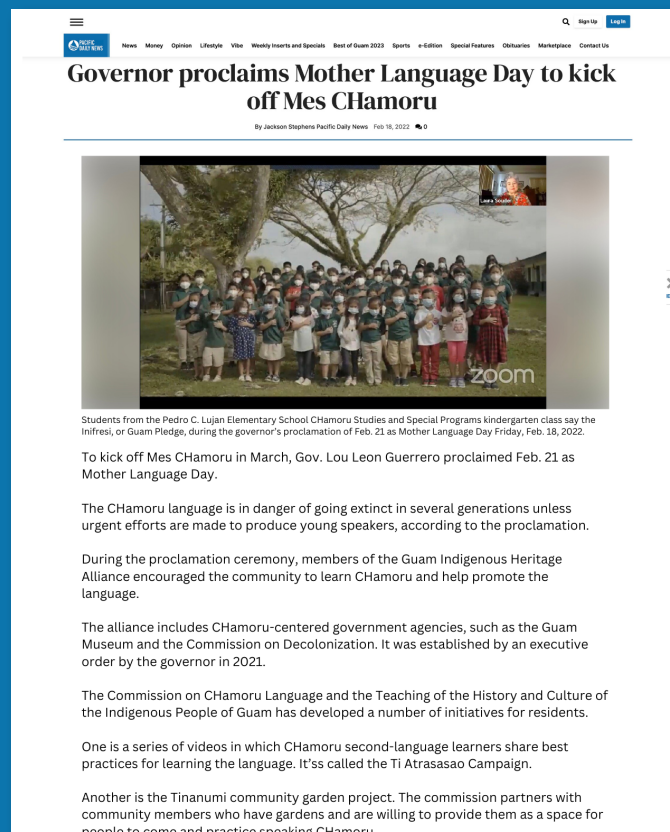


# Såkkán Siha nu i Lenguåhen i Manaotao Tåno', Entenasiónát 2022 asta 2032

EXECUTIVE DECLARATION OF  
UNITED NATIONS INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE DECADE 2022-2032

“Optimistic estimates suggest that at least 50 percent of today’s spoken languages will be extinct or seriously endangered by 2100. More pessimistic, but also realistic estimates claim that 90-95 percent will become extinct or seriously endangered by the end of of this century. Most of these languages are Indigenous languages. Humanity may well have only 300-600 oral languages left that are unthreatened by the end of this century.

Bearing in mind that the revitalization of Indigenous languages requires sustained effort by Indigenous Peoples, Member States, and the United Nations system, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues recommended the General Assembly to proclaim an International Decade on Indigenous Languages in 2019. As recommended by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the UN General Assembly proclaimed in 2019 through Resolution A/74/396 the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032).



The Permanent Forum believes that the International Decade provides a unique opportunity for creating sustainable changes in complex social dynamics for the preservation, revitalization, and promotion of Indigenous languages.”

In recognition of this significant call out to indigenous people to revitalize and promote the continuity of their endangered languages and cultures, the Governor of Guam, Maga'håga Lourdes Leon Guerrero proclaimed 2022-2032 as the Decade of Indigenous Languages in Guåhan through Proclamation on February 18, 2022.

Scan the QR Code below to watch the Proclamation Signing Ceremony.





# Ripót Kada Sàkkan

## ANNUAL REPORTS

Our Annual Report is the story of the Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru , its progress, our values, achievements, and goals. We are obligated by law to submit a report each year to the Governor of Guam and the Guam Legislature. You can find our past and current reports on our website.



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kumisionchamoru@gmail.com  
www.kumisionchamoru.guam.gov

# HINAGO'

## EXPANSION OF ARCHIVE AND RESOURCE LIBRARY

Priority Goal D focuses on creating the archival infrastructure for CHamoru language, culture, and history resources that will be publicly accessible. This will be accomplished by recruiting interns and consultants who will research, compile, and archive materials that are CHamoru-centric or relevant to work of the Kumisión. The archive will also allow us to expand our resources in areas such as CHamoru genealogy and Guam place names. Our goal is to build a comprehensive, sustainable repository of materials about CHamoru language, history, and culture for access by the community and for future scholars and students.

### Deliverables:

- Install Collections Management System
- Procure Furniture, Equipment, and Supplies
- Obtain MOUs with archival institutions and organizations
- Develop Map Collection
- Develop Resource Library



# Rinikohen Rikuetdo

## CHAMORU ARCHIVE

Documentation, preservation, and dissemination of materials in the CHamoru language are key to developing CHamoru literacy and knowledge about our indigenous language, beliefs, history, and cultural practices. The digital revolution has provided this generation with tools and a virtual platform to record and store materials and make these resources available to a wide range of stakeholders both here in Guåhan and to all interested parties.

The Kumisión is working to identify and acquire or document valuable cultural knowledge through its multimedia studio and through a robust outreach effort. This is a far-reaching endeavor which requires the expertise of an archivist, staff, and volunteers. The long term goal is to house the most comprehensive collection of CHamoru resources in the world and make these resources readily available to the public.



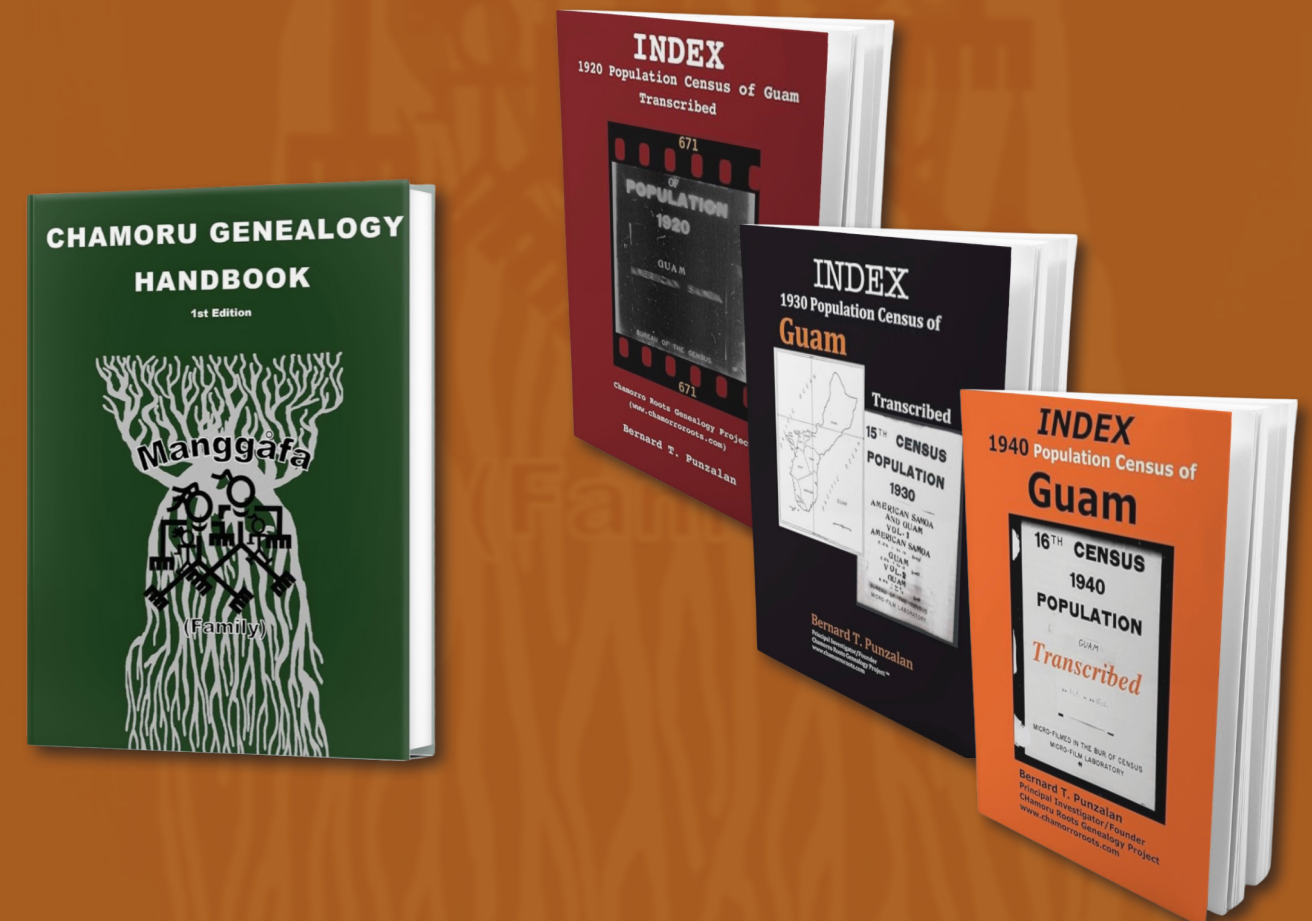
# Rinikohen Rikuetdo

## GENEALOGY RESOURCE LAB

The envisioned Genealogy Resource Lab seeks to provide a community space to access existing CHamoru genealogical research and obtain information about their family histories.

The Kumisión plans to incorporate the genealogical research compiled and collected by Bernard Punzalan and other ethnohistorians. We will also reach out to community members to gather information regarding different clans and stories throughout the island.

In addition to having these documents in a central space, the community will also be able to consult with other genealogy buffs, and get assistance in the genealogical research process and archived information on our newly acquired CHamoru Roots database housing the largest and most comprehensive digital record of CHamoru genealogical information.





# Rinikohen Rikuetdo

## RECORDS OF FIRST CHAMORU LANGUAGE COMMISSION

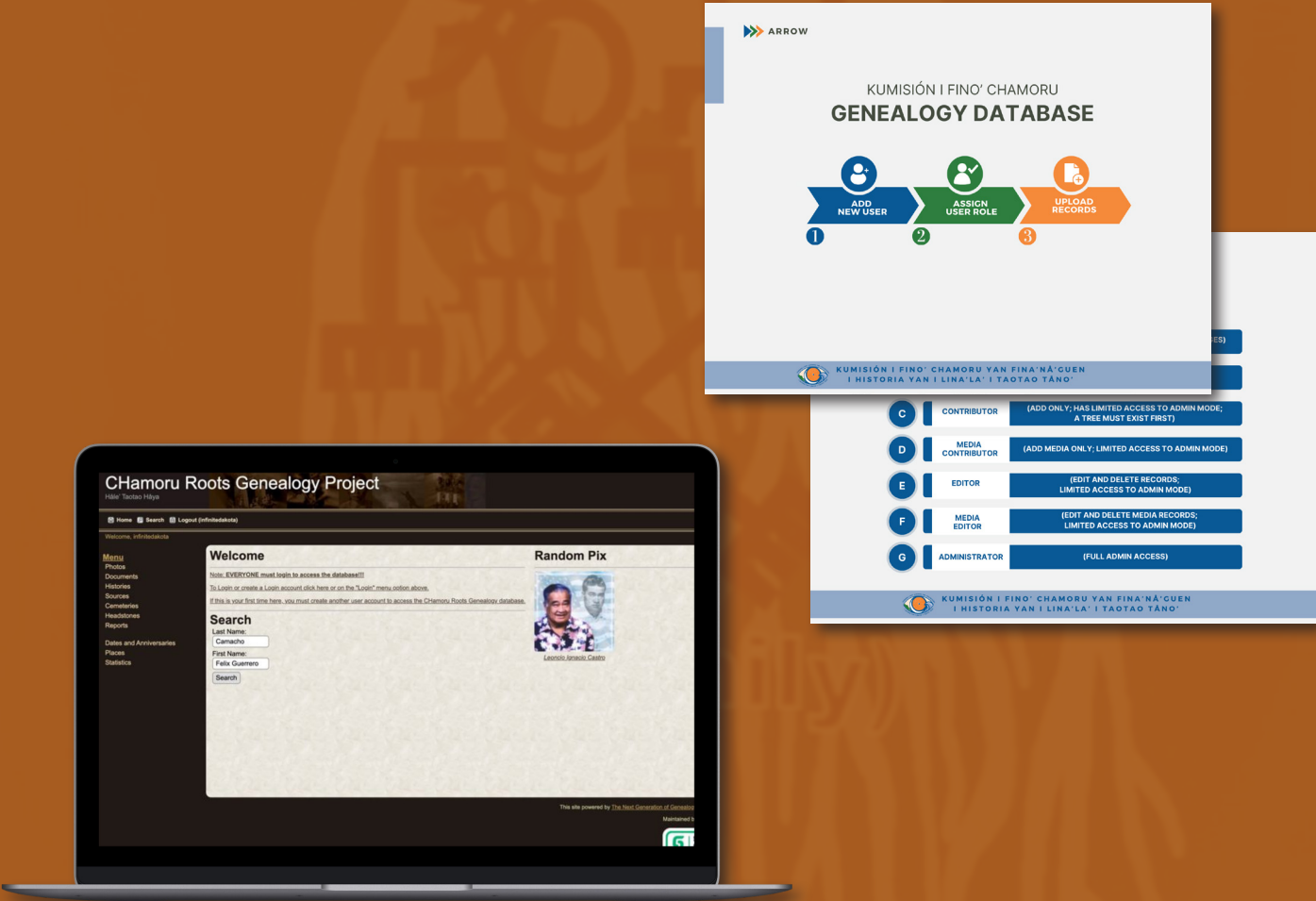
In 2018, at the start of the first term of the Leon Guerrero-Tenorio Administration, the Kumisión was invited to join the President of the Department of CHamoru Affairs (DCA) for an inspection of a storage room at the Historic Preservation Division office of the Department of Parks and Recreation. To our great surprise, we uncovered boxes of records belonging to the first Kumisión. We requested for all the material to be placed in our custody for archival purposes. This collection of records became the first items in the CHamoru Archive. They are currently being organized and curated.



# Rinikohen Rikuetdo

## CHAMORU ROOTS DATABASE

In 2023, the Kumisión acquired the CHamoru Roots database and resources from Bernard Punzalan, who is working with the Kumisión to set up a Genealogy Lab for public use. The Genealogy database is a valuable indigenous asset and serves as a vital resource for CHamoru families researching their family histories and lineages.





# HINAGO'

## MANHÍHITA: PARTNERSHIPS, ALLIANCES, AND NETWORKS

Priority Goal E focuses on building a sustainable and vast network for the island's cultural agencies and organizations to collaborate with one another. This is being accomplished by creating partnerships such as GIHA, the Educational Consortium, the Nina'fitme Working Group, GDOE, learningchamoru.com, PBS Guam, UOG/MARC, GCC, Guam Mayors Council, and others to collectively build a comprehensive foundation for the CHamoru language, history, and culture to thrive. Our aim is to ensure that the establishment of partnerships involves language advocates and community stakeholders to contribute their resources; and, voice their concerns and perspectives about critical decisions relating to CHamoru heritage.

### Deliverables:

- Partnerships with MARC, USGS, Eskuelan Sinipok, GCC, Chief Hurao Academy, Guam Mayors Council, and UmeyakCHamoru.com
- CHamoru Experts, Interns, and Traditional Knowledge Experts
- CHamoru Medium Education Consortium
- Village Partnerships



## Fina'nå'guen i Mandikike'

CHIEF HURAO ACADEMY

A language cannot survive without young speakers. The Chief Hurao Neni Academy offers early childhood CHamoru immersion classes to three and four-year olds. It also serves as a vital pipeline for GDOE's Sinipok kindergarten enrollment. The Kumisión has partnered with Hurao in this endeavor by jointly developing materials for young learners and supporting the Eskuelan Mañaina through grant funds. We share meeting and training space for Hurao professional development activities and collaborate on projects and grant opportunities.





# Ginihan Mantekno'

CHAMORU EXPERTS, INTERNS, AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE EXPERTS

The Kumisión recognizes and values the profound knowledge and traditional expertise of those who are fluent and proficient in the CHamoru language and/or are known for their knowledge and expertise in traditional cultural practices and the arts. These partnerships are essential to inform and guide the work of the Kumisión and to elevate and celebrate the wisdom that has been passed down through generations by our ancestors.



# Setbision Bisitan Guåhan

GUAM VISITORS BUREAU

Our partnership with the Guam Visitors Bureau is key to our outreach efforts with the business community. They have co-sponsored several major events with the Kumisión including their most recent support with the Kompetensian Kometsiu that we launched for this year's Mes CHamoru celebration. GVB has also provided conference paraphernalia such as ditty bags, lanyards, and pens for our Indigenous Language Summit and Genealogy Workshop. The Kumisión supports GVB's efforts in promoting cultural tourism here on Guam and is committed to collaborating in ways that will enhance the use of the CHamoru language and the accurate representation of our history and culture for residents and visitors alike. To learn more about the Kompetensian Kometsiu scan the QR Codes below.







# Ináfa'maolek Ginen i Sengsong

## GUAM MAYORS COUNCIL

Working with village mayors to establish a network of resources at the village grassroots level is valuable to the work of the Kumisión in various ways. Cultural knowledge and talents are more readily identified among the youth, the elders, and village leaders. The resourcing of this network will strengthen, connect, and nurture ties between the community and the Kumisión. For more information on our village collaboration scan the QR Codes below.

**Mayors seek first-language Chamoru speakers for place-name project**

Public Daily News  
Volume 14, Number 100, Pacific Daily News, Dec 28, 2019

Former University of Guam President Robert Underwood asked mayors, before seeking their help for a project about proper and original Chamoru names of areas around the island.

Underwood said he remembers the name well since his parents, when he was growing up, never mentioned Piti. Instead, they talked about Tepungan.

It's just one of the places on Guam Underwood has been doing research on, under a grant from the National Science Foundation. It's part of a bigger project that helps to document the Chamoru language.

Underwood said Chamoru can be considered an endangered language because it isn't being transmitted in the home intergenerationally.

Underwood sought mayors' help in identifying one or two elderly people in the village who believe have deep knowledge about the Chamoru names of places in their area. A draft list of place names has already been prepared, but first-language Chamoru speakers from the older generations could help expand, retract or correct that list. He said there have markers and monuments erected bearing the wrong place names.

**Google Maps**

"You have to help us out because we want to be able to get those names, place, put them in the right coordinates, and then that way, they show up on Google Maps. Underwood told mayors at a recent Mayors' Council of Guam special meeting that he wanted to put a badge of honor for your village and a badge of honor for you, personally, that you were the one to guide this process."

The Kumisión i Fino' Chamoru, he said, partnered with Google Maps so these Chamoru place names will find their way in future maps generated by Google, the online search engine giant.



**First public hearing for Guam place names project (1)**

Like Comment Share

3 · 483 views

**Kumisión i Fino' Chamoru yan i Fina'na'guen i Historia yan Lin'la' i Tostao' Tano' (The Commission on the Chamoru Language and the Teaching of the History and Culture of the Indigenous People of Guam) or the Kumisión, held its first public hearing Tuesday night for the I Nao'ni Logit or the Guam Place Names Project.**

Dr. Robert Underwood, Ge'hi'lo, Kumisión i Fino' Chamoru, spoke with K57's Patti Arroyo about the project on Tuesday morning.

At a hearing for the bill reverting Inarajan to its original Chamoru name, Inalahan, Underwood said the Kumisión recently passed a master plan for changing village names and it includes an extensive place naming process in consultation with the mayors. The process also includes public hearings and outreaches all over the island. Underwood says the village name changes are required by law. <https://www.k57.com/news/k57-patti-arroyo-interviews-dr-robert-underwood-about-the-guam-place-names-project/>

See less

Be the first to leave a comment.

Write a comment...



# Ináfa'maolek yan i Mañe'lu-ta

## CHAMORRO-CAROLINIAN LANGUAGE POLICY COMMISSION

The work of the Kumisión would not be complete without the collaboration without sisters and brothers to the north. While Guåhan and the CNMI have been divided politically by our colonizers, we share bloodline and ancestry which predates colonization by thousands of years. These ties make it a mission imperative to explore ways of strengthening communication and cooperation in our collective efforts to preserve and maintain the CHamoru language and culture for generations to come. To this end, we have actively engaged in discussions with the Policy Commission and have jointly participated in the Mariånas History Conference, the NMI Dictionary Project, cultural exchanges, joint meetings and most recently the Indigenous Language Summit in 2023. Our intent is to continue to cultivate this partnership through such joint endeavors. The QR code below will take you to the Chamorro-Carolinian Language Policy Commission website.





# Inayudan i Manhoben

## SUMMER PROGRAM INTERNS

In June 2021 and 2022 the Kumisión hosted summer interns from the Department of Youth Affairs (DYA). The engagement of youth in activities that expand their knowledge of the work of the Kumisión and its mission is integral to their developing the knowledge and skills that encourage and shape their future commitment to maintaining the CHamoru language, cultural practices, and values. We are hopeful that we can engage interns this year and in the future.



# GIHA

## GUAM INDIGENOUS HERITAGE ALLIANCE

The Maga'håga Lou Leon Guerrero established GIHA, the Guam Indigenous Heritage Alliance by Executive Order No. 2021-06 on March 12, 2021 as a vehicle for cohesive, coordinated, and cross-department movement and strategic planning toward CHamoru self-determination, decolonization, and cultural sovereignty. Scan the QR Codes for more information on the establishment of GIHA.

The member agencies of GIHA:

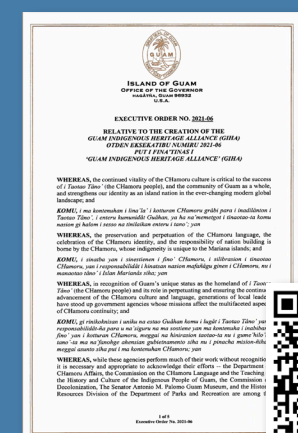
The Department of CHamoru Affairs /  
Senator Antonio M. Palomo Guam Museum

The Commission on the CHamoru Language and the Teaching  
of the History and Culture of the Indigenous People of Guam

The Commission on Decolonization

The Historic Resources Division of the Department of Parks and  
Recreation

serve under the supervision of the Office of the Governor of Guam. The key agencies comprising GIHA were authorized to establish networks and partnerships with other governmental entities and/or non-governmental organizations. The Kumisión offered to provide administrative support to GIHA members at their meetings and to keep GIHA records for the first few years. Since its establishment, GIHA members have met regularly and supported each other's missions. The Kumisión is fully committed to continuing its partnerships with GIHA members and network of CHamoru-centered and CHamoru-serving organizations.



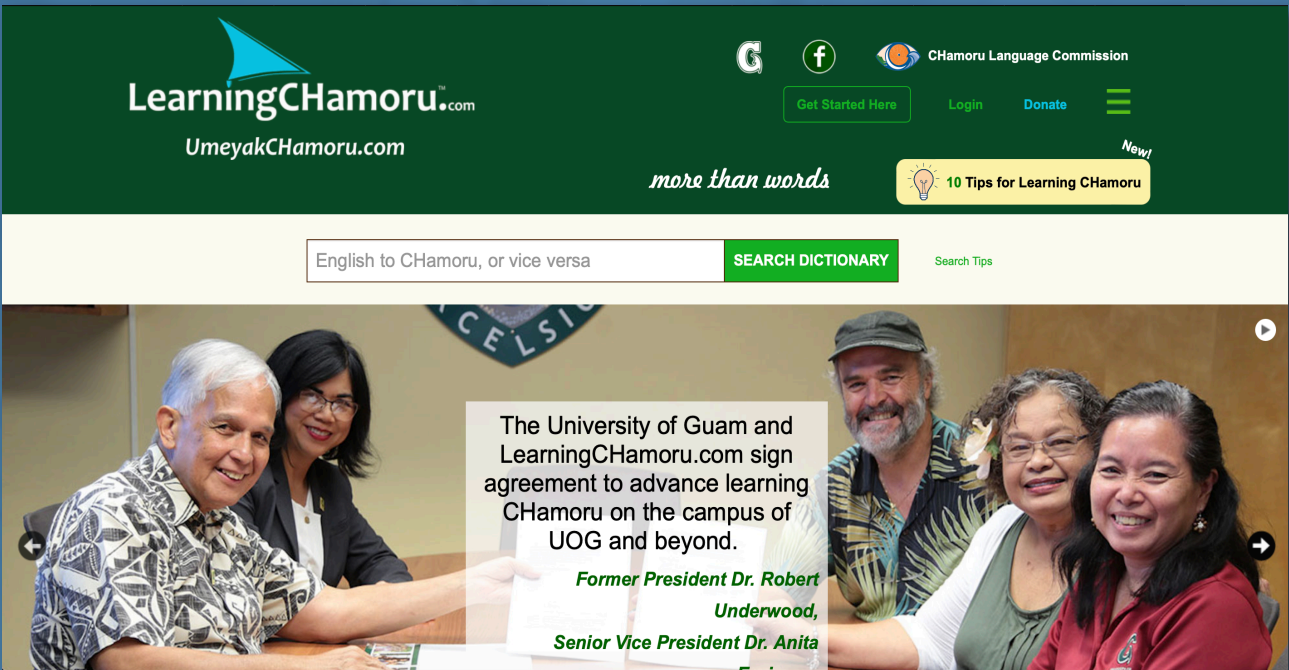




The Kumisión established a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Umeyak CHamoru signed on October 12, 2018. As part of our partnership with *UmeyakCHamoru.com*, the Kumisión is committed to enhancing the viable online platform, which is currently available to the public for free. Through this collaboration, Kumisión members have offered their expertise in the CHamoru language and culture as well as the history of the Mariånas to create new content for the website. The MOU is ongoing. The Kumisión has also supported the platform with funding. To access their website, scan the QR Code above.



The Kumisión has expanded its partnership with the Guam Community College beyond the initial agreement by GCC to serve as the Kumisión’s fiscal agent. Since 2021, we have partnered to offer a Certificate to teachers on Immersion Techniques and Teaching CHamoru as a Language Art. Four cohorts of teachers have either completed or are currently in the certificate program. Additionally, GCC has worked with the Kumisión to expand its Nina’fitme i Fina’ná’guen CHamoru initiative through direct engagement with students. The goal of this program is to create a sustainable framework for teaching and learning fluency and proficiency in CHamoru at home and at school.







# Dinanña' Mamfáfa'na'gue

## CHAMORU MEDIUM EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

The urgency to revitalize and reclaim the CHamoru language is even more critical as we will lose a vast majority of our most fluent speakers in the next 10 years.

It is not too late. We can still do something about this crisis if we band together across political and ideological lines to provide the needed resources to leverage and enhance current efforts and build a sustaining institutionalized framework for CHamoru Medium Education.

The Consortium committee members are:

Chief Hurao, Inc. dba Chief Hurao Academy  
Anna Marie B. Arceo  
Ma'ina Diego

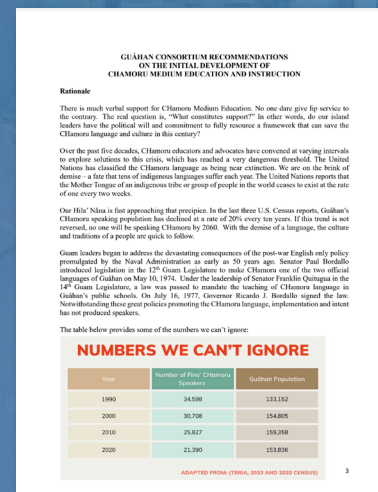
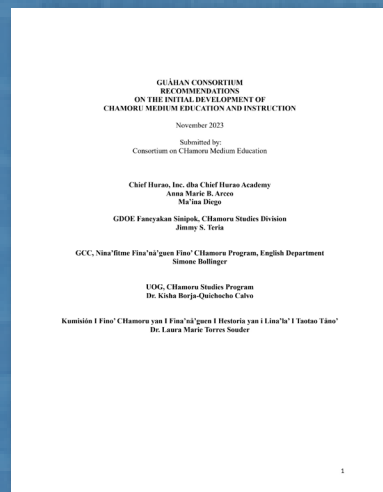
GDOE Faneyåkan Sinipok, CHamoru Studies Division  
Jimmy S. Teria

GCC, Nina'fitme Fina'ná'guen Fino' CHamoru Program,  
English Department  
Simone Bollinger

UOG, CHamoru Studies Program  
Dr. Kisha Borja-Quichocho Calvo

Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru yan i Fina'ná'guen i Historia yan  
i Lina'la'i Taotao Tåno'  
Dr. Laura M. Torres Souder

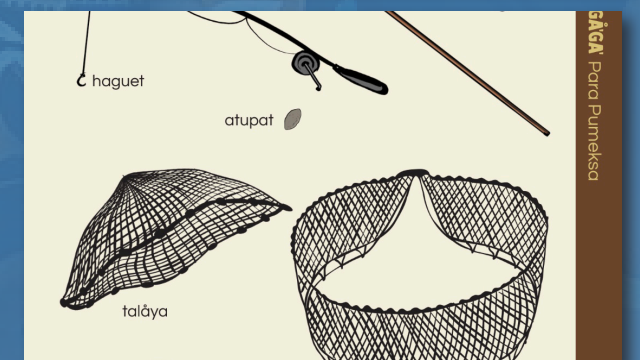
The Consortium has proposed the establishment of a Public Foundation, *Inethon i Fina'ná'guen yan Ineyak i Fino' CHamoru* as the most viable organization structure to institutionalize CHamoru Medium Education. This proposal has been submitted to Speaker Terlaje of the 37<sup>th</sup> Guam Legislature for consideration and legislation.



To this end, a CHamoru Language Educators Consortium was convened to research, discuss, and propose such a platform for reversing this catastrophic linguistic trend in our trajectory as the Taotao Tåno'. Spurred by Legislative Resolution No. 69-73(COR) introduced by Speaker Therese M. Terlaje and Senator Chris Barnett, the Consortium was charged with recommending "... how the full development of CHamoru Language education and instruction in Guam can be supported by each of these (participating Consortium stakeholders) government and private entities."

The Consortium has met on a monthly basis since its inception in the Fall of 2022 and in a two-day Planning Retreat on October 17 & 18, 2023 to clearly articulate the vision, mission, and philosophy of a viable structure for implementing a coordinated, sustainable CHamoru Medium Education strategy for Guam.

The Consortium is made up of individuals working towards the perpetuation of the CHamoru language and culture.





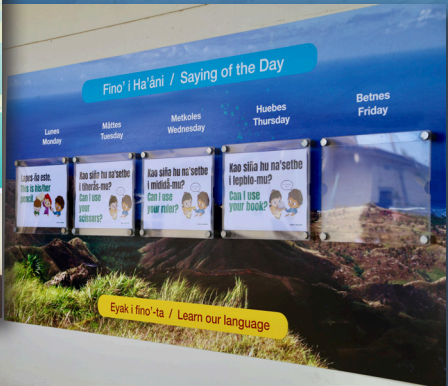
# Eskuelan San Francisco

## ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

We have engaged in a long-term partnership with Saint Francis Catholic School to develop a CHamoru-English dual language school model for Guåhan. The goal is to increase the use of CHamoru among both students and teachers at the SFCS site and to pilot strategies for transforming their English-only medium of instruction into a bilingual approach. The partnership aims to transform SFCS into a CHamoru learning organization, where students, families, teachers, administrators, and staff increasingly learn and use CHamoru in classroom instruction and all forms of communication throughout the school.



Weak or Yu-type Pronouns	Agreement forms or Hu-type Pronouns	Possessors or Possessive Pronouns	Independent or Emphatic Pronouns
Magof yo', Magof hao, Magof guo', Mammagof hi, Mammagof hao, Mammagof hanyo, Mammagof ehu,	Hi tugo', Hu tugo', Hu tugo', Hu tugo', Hu tugo', Hu tugo', Hu tugo',	Iepblo-hu (hu), Iepblo-mu, Iepblo-ta, Iepblo-mu-mu, Iepblo-mu-mu, Iepblo-mu-mu, Iepblo-mu-mu,	gashu, hagu, gashu, hagu, gashu, hagu, gashu,



# Bishop Museum

Representatives from the Bernice P. Bishop Museum visited with Kumisión members to discuss the repatriation of CHamoru artifacts in their collection that they obtained from Hans G. Hornbostel, a hired amateur archaeologist and Marine in the 1920s. Discussion centered on how crucial it is to understand and acknowledge the culture and heritage these artifacts represent to ensure their proper preservation, interpretation, and return to their homeland. The Museum Representatives stressed how collaborative efforts between museums and organizations like Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru are essential for fostering cultural understanding and facilitating the responsible stewardship of such artifacts.





# Hale' Taotao Håya

## CHAMORU ROOTS

There are many members of our CHamoru community both on island and throughout the diaspora who have a keen interest in documenting their family histories and connecting with kinship networks through genealogical resources. Bernard Punzalan, creator of the CHamoru Roots database, is perhaps the most widely consulted because of his decades-long work in tirelessly documenting the names and other information pertinent to tracing relationships and making this information available through the database and products he has created. Our partnership with Mr. Punzalan puts the Kumisión in an ideal position to jumpstart our Genealogy Lab with his guidance and expertise.



The US Board of Geographic Names (BGN) was first established in 1890 and formed by Public Law (80-242) in 1947. The main purpose is to maintain uniform geographic name usage throughout the Federal Government. The BGN is under the United States Geological Survey, Department of Interior. In carrying out its functions, the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) maintains the list of geographic names. Geographic names generally apply to rivers, coastlines, traditional places, mountains, and other geographic features. They do not apply to political jurisdictions unless there is specific political action via legislation. Geographic names do not apply to official designations for buildings, parks, or facilities.

As agreed in a meeting on July 27, 2022, the Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru is now officially recognized as the body from which the BGN will receive information regarding geographic names for Guam. Historically, they received input from a variety of sources including the Department of Defense and the Department of Interior. Any information regarding official changes and future geographic changes will be accepted by the BGN Census Bureau / Civil Division if they come from the Kumisión.

Political jurisdictions like the municipalities (or villages) or the island itself (Guam, not Guåhan) will only change if accompanied by legal action from the Government of Guam. The recent changes to five village names have been submitted in accordance with Guam Public Law. The name change to Hagåtña will automatically change Hagåtña River, but will not affect Agana Heights. The river is a geographical feature whereas the latter is a political jurisdiction.

Names for facilities, buildings, and parks will continue to be recognized. For example, Joseph Flores Park will continue to be part of the mapping. However, if the Kumisión decided to regularize place names in accordance with the Orthography, Joseph Flores Park will be located in Ipao and not Ypao.

Future federal government maps and information as listed in the GNIS will follow the decisions of the Kumisión if the Kumisión proceeds in accordance with its own processes as required by Guam Public Law. Internet mapping will likely follow the lead of the Kumisión as reflected in the GNIS.

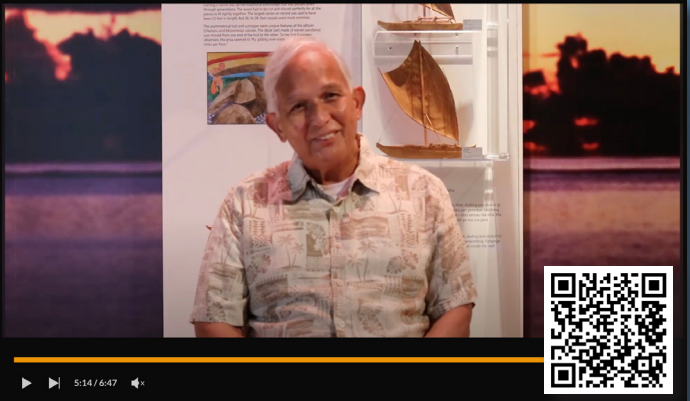




# Dipattamenton Kaohao Guinahan CHamoru yan i Inangokkon Inadahen Guåhan

DEPARTMENT OF CHAMORU AFFAIRS AND  
GUAM MUSEUM

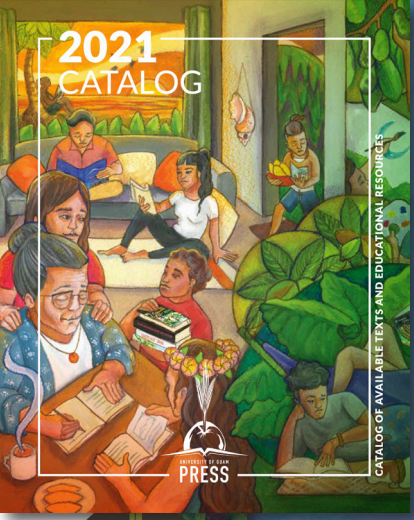
By law, the President of the Department of CHamoru Affairs is a member of the Kumisión. As such, the Kumisión, DCA, and the Guam Museum collaborate closely on projects and support each other's missions actively. Board members and staff engage in activities that preserve and protect CHamoru history, language, and culture and seek ways of partnering to leverage resources and expertise in public programming. Scan the QR Codes below to watch CHamoru Kada Ha'ani interviews at the Guam Museum with board members, Dr. Laura Torres Souder and Dr. Robert A. Underwood and Kumisión staff member Dr. Francine Naputi.



# Unibetsidát Guåhan

MARC, UOG PRESS, AND CHAMORU PROGRAM AT UOG

The Kumisión and UOG share research, publications, and teaching objectives related to building awareness and expertise in CHamoru history, language, and culture. To this end, we have established working Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) relative to several ongoing projects located at MARC and UOG Press. We have also collaborated in language studies and have partnered with the CHamoru program as members of the CHamoru Medium Education Consortium and for other grants.



- UOG Press  
Advisory Council and Staff**
- Robert Underwood**  
President Emeritus, University of Guam
  - Thomas Krise**  
President, University of Guam
  - Monique Storie**  
Dean, University of Guam Libraries
  - Shariel Santos-Bamba**  
Associate Dean,  
UOG College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
  - Anna Marie B. Arceo**  
Administrator, Chamoru Language  
Kumisión / Fina' CHamoru
  - Joseph Sanchez**  
Guam Department of Education  
Curriculum and Instructional Imp
  - Rindraty Celes Limtiaco**  
President and Publisher, Pacific D
  - Maria Leon Guerrero**  
Executive Vice President and  
Chief Operating Officer, Bank of Guam
  - Victoria-Lola Leon Guerrero**  
Managing Editor
  - Akina Chagualaf**  
Marketing Communications Coordinator
  - Jayleen Sidhu**  
Office and Inventory Manager







# Dibisión Inestudion CHamoru yan Espesiát na Progrãma Siha

CHAMORU STUDIES AND SPECIAL PROJECTS DIVISION, DOE

The successful execution of the CHamoru Studies and Special Projects Division mandate is of great importance to the Kumisión's revitalization mission. Two Kumisión Board members are GDOE appointees who hail from the Division. As part of this essential partnership, the Kumisión is committed to developing tools and learning materials to be used by educators and students. Further, we hope to collaborate with the Division in aligning all of its instructional material with the CHamoru Orthography. The Kumisión periodically provides professional development of CHamoru teachers and works alongside the Division as members of the Nina'fitme Planning Group and of the CHamoru Medium Education Consortium. Kumisión members also serve as mañaina to the Faneyåkan Sinipok, GDOE's CHamoru Immersion program.

Our Immersion Certificate Program at GCC was designed to assist the Division in building teacher capacity.



## HINAGO'

### TRANSLATION SERVICES

Priority Goal F focuses on building a network of Fino' CHamoru translators who can ensure that translated materials and content are orthographically aligned and accurate. This goal is being accomplished through Orthography training sessions; a translator certification and referral process; and, serving as a clearinghouse for completed work. The creation of this network and a structure of support will ensure that translators are appropriately compensated. Our aim is to facilitate services to the community which are reliable, accurate, and reflect appropriate representations of the CHamoru language.

#### Deliverables:

- Develop a certification program and directory of certified translators
- Establish a webpage for requesting translation services
- Train translators to align with orthography



# Setbision Pinila’ Siha

## TRANSLATION SERVICES

CHamoru is one of Guåhan’s two official languages. As such, it needs to be recognized and utilized as an equal medium of communication in the public sector. The tedious but important work of translating written English into CHamoru text in alignment with Guåhan’s Official Orthography is a key component of building CHamoru literacy. The Kumisión provides translations to the Governor’s Office and the Guam Legislature upon request. Numerous other requests for assistance from both public and private entities and individuals are received daily. While we are not able to provide translations for all requests, the Kumisión’s Fino’ Committee does engage regularly in providing assistance or referring interested parties to a list of Board vetted CHamoru translators. Clearly, the volume of requests that we receive indicate a growing need for reliable orthographically aligned translations. To meet this need, We are currently developing the certification process to ensure quality translation services exist in the public and private sectors. Once the Kumisión is legally authorized to charge for services, we intend to hire certified translators who will be able to perform translation services through the Kumisión on a more consistent basis.

KU  
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siha  
kisu  
sasi  
inas

KU  
Tân  
gêfi  
ent  
pari  
ansi  
ma  
kott  
umi  
dire  
na :  
dim  
sine  
hâte  
ninu

KU  
tina  
inâf

KUMU, ha é'enook i Nasionen Unidos i enteru na tâno' na u ma cl supotte i hi siha sigûn mamffino'

KUMU, fi sosiât, ikun inâdanfia' mandâtufuya

KUMU, pu i dos mit d Siha kosak ma adahi, c KUMU, i ma'usa-ña, sichu'asion hinasso siha yan hâyi g na fifino' r gof palaks lokkue' ha 'fine' nena i


PRUKLAMASIÓNUMIRU 2024-14

Un Pruklamasiôn i Maga'hâga MA PRUKLÂLAMA 2024, I SAKKAN I FINO' I MANAOTAO TÂNO' SIHA YAN I DIHA 21 KUMU HÂ'ÂNEN HILA' NÂNA, GI ENTENASIÓNÂT

KUMU, ginen i fino' na manâ'atungo' yan manâ'akuentusi hit yan i enteru na tâno', ta na'â'annok manhâyi hit, ta sâsangan i historia yan kotturâ-ta, ta eyak ya ta difende i direchon tinaotao-ta siha, yan ta fañaonao gi i kinalamten lina'la' i tinaotao-ta gi i tano'-ta;

KUMU, i Fino' CHamoru i lengguâhen i manaotao Tâno' Lâguas yan Gâni, ni' ma tungo' pâ'go kumu Islas Mariânas, ya ma kumiti siha na para u ma adahi yan ma na'la'la' i fino'-ta sa' este numa'chichilong hit yan i ântes na mañaina-ta, i tiningo'-ñiha, i minalâte', i lina'la' yan kostumbre, i hinengge yan i chinilong i irensian hâga' kumu i Fine' nena na Taotao;

KUMU, inespápanta, i fino' CHamoru, i Hila' Nanâ-ta, na siha ha' ma funas gi halom ti megaggai na hinirasiôn ni' manmamamaila' yanggen ti ta alulâyi numa'huyong manhoben na kuikuentos siha para u nina'siguru na u sinesteni yan u ma kontenuha mo'na;



# Setbisiu para i Ahensian Púpbleku

## GOVGUAM SERVICES

As official languages, all public documents and public announcements and notices should appear in CHamoru as well as in English. Because CHamoru was not taught as a written language until relatively recently, bilingual employees in the public sector cannot be expected to write proficiently in CHamoru without capacity building. To this end, the Kumisión has provided training on the orthography to GovGuam representatives from each agency.

We plan to continue to offer more hands-on training in written CHamoru to enhance the CHamoru literacy skills of a cadre of public sector employees who can serve as translators or CHamoru writers at their places of work.





# HINAGO’

## PUBLICATIONS/PRINTING AND DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING RESOURCES

Priority Goal G focuses on generating publications about the CHamoru language, history, and culture through the creation of books, language learning tools, and other educational resources. This endeavor is being accomplished through the development and production of cultural dictionaries, historically accurate maps, and newer forms of print and digital learning content. Our aim is for both individuals and groups such as families to be able to learn about the CHamoru language, history, and culture through fresh, interactive products and platforms.

### Deliverables:

- Develop and Publish Cultural Dictionary Volumes
- Partner with GDOE to Align Resources with Kumisión Orthography
- Publish Listan Palåbra as Digital Word Finder
- Create CHamoru Language Learning Tools
- Publish Digital Place Names Atlas
- Publish CHamoru Nursery Rhymes and other Collections for Learners Pre-K to 20
- Produce and Publish Kumisión Reports
- Publish digital collection of orthographically aligned novenas, prayers, and songs

## Ginen i Hila’ Nāna Rinikohen Tiningo’ yan Sinangan Siha CULTURAL DICTIONARY PROJECT

The depth and breadth of the CHamoru language with its rich use of metaphors and phrases with double meaning cannot easily be captured in the traditional dictionary format of listing words and their definitions. Our aim is to more effectively promote the use of *Guåhan’s official CHamoru Orthography*, revitalize the learning and teaching of our indigenous language, and preserve the traditions and wisdom of our ancestors.

The Kumisión has embarked on creating cultural dictionaries that feature rich entries in both CHamoru and English. Expressions about values, behavior, labels, and traditions reveal subtle meanings. They represent creative ways that our ancestors taught their beliefs and acceptable codes of conduct, often through humorous twists of words.

We have produced Volume I, which was released in 2022, and Volume II, which will be released in 2024. Our intent is to continue building this series with other volumes for age-appropriate learners. For more information scan the QR Code below.





# Inayudu Para Inadilanto

## CHAMORU FLUENCY AND PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Any effort to determine how well the student population in the Pre-K to post secondary education levels are learning to speak, read, and write in CHamoru requires tools that are designed to measure progress in spoken fluency and reading and writing proficiency. As there are no standardized assessment tools currently in use, the Kumisión included the development of Fluency and Proficiency Assessment instruments as part of a grant proposal to ANA. Funding was received and the tools will be developed by a CHamoru Expert Coordinator and a team of five teachers in the summer of 2024. The team have experience in teaching CHamoru at the different grade levels. The assessments will be structured to measure progress in each of the four language domains and five levels of language capacity benchmarking off of the work previously piloted by some teachers at different grade levels. Tools will be in a digital format and offered online to educators and other users.

# Nå'an Lugát Ginen i Mañaina-ta

## GUAM PLACE NAMES AND DIGITAL ATLAS

The Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru serves as the Kunité i Na'an Lugát. As such, it is mandated to develop criteria for place naming and to establish itself as the authority on Guam place names.

Through this project, the Kumisión is collaborating with island mayors, elders, village informants, and Government of Guam agencies to identify traditional place names, document their origin if known, and usage. These findings will be corroborated and designated on maps to be shared with Government of Guam agencies and the public. The end goal is to create digital maps of each municipality designating the geographic areas referenced by traditional names.

**I Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru**  
**IS**  
**SEEKING...**

**CHamoru Language**  
**Assessment Coordinator**

*and*

**CHamoru Language**  
**Assessment Teacher Team**

**KUMISIÓN I FINO' CHAMORU YAN I FINANÁ GUEN**  
**I HISTORIA YAN I LINALA' I TAOTAO TANO'**  
(Commission on CHamoru Language and the Teaching of the History and Culture of the Indigenous People of Guam)

Seeking a five-member team of CHamoru Teachers to develop Fluency and Proficiency Assessments for Learners of the CHamoru Language

**Scope of Services**

Develop a framework and preliminary assessment tools for evaluating fluency and proficiency in different age cohorts, scaffolded at four levels.

If you would like to apply for this consultancy, you may email a Letter of Interest with your resume no later than October 10, 2023, to the Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru at:

[kumisionchamoru@kumision.guam.gov](mailto:kumisionchamoru@kumision.guam.gov)

Indicate in the SUBJECT line: CHamoru Language Assessment Teacher Team

The qualifications are as follows:

1. CHamoru language fluency and proficiency
2. Teaching experience in the CHamoru language
3. Development and utilization of language assessment tools
4. Must be able to sign with Guam Orthography

The Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru will engage the professional services of CHamoru Teachers through its ANA Ina'itme i Finai'itme CHamoru Grant during the period October 30, 2023-July 2024.

October 16, 2023 | UMG

**KUMISIÓN I FINO' CHAMORU YAN I FINANÁ GUEN**  
**I HISTORIA YAN I LINALA' I TAOTAO TANO'**  
(Commission on CHamoru Language and the Teaching of the History and Culture of the Indigenous People of Guam)

Seeking a five-member team of CHamoru Teachers to develop Fluency and Proficiency Assessments for Learners of the CHamoru Language

**Scope of Services**

Develop a framework and preliminary assessment tools for evaluating fluency and proficiency in different age cohorts, scaffolded at four levels.

If you would like to apply for this consultancy, you may email a Letter of Interest with your resume no later than October 10, 2023, to the Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru at:

[kumisionchamoru@kumision.guam.gov](mailto:kumisionchamoru@kumision.guam.gov)

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# Tiniroron Neni

## CHAMORU NURSERY RHYMES

*Tiniroron Neni* is a delightful compilation that brings together a collection of traditional and modern lullabies, poems, and songs. This product showcases the flexibility of the CHamoru language to adapt children’s songs and rhymes that are popular in English. Their familiarity encourages young children to learn the CHamoru lyrics. They expand their vocabulary and experience language learning in a fun way. This children’s book will be released in 2024.

# Tinanumi

## CHAMORU PLANTING STORY

*Tinanumi* is the story of a young girl who is curious about her name. As she learns what it means, she also learns how to plant, cultivate and harvest her favorite vegetables in her family’s *guålo*. The book is meant to engage children in their own journeys of planting what they consume and understanding more fully the relationship between themselves, the land, and food sovereignty. This children’s book will be released in 2024.





# Kåttan Finiho'

FLASHCARDS

An integral part of the Kumisión's revitaliztion effort is to support language learning in early childhood. This set of 400 flashcards based on different themed subsets builds vocabulary in fun ways using visual depictions of easily recognizable objects and features in Guåhan's environment. This tool will be released in 2024.



# I Fanselabåyan

SYLLABARY TILES

CHamoru is a syllabic language. Orthographic rules are tied to syllables and pronunciation is linked with the position of stressed and unstressed vowels within syllables. The complex application of grammar and spelling rules comes naturally to first-language speakers as they learn what to say and how to speak. As the CHamoru language moves from orality to literacy, children learn Guåhan's indigenous language in the classroom by first learning alphabets and symbols and associating sounds with written representations. This set of syllabary tiles represent the most common sounds learners hear and speak in CHamoru. It is a simple tool that facilitates the process of recognition of the combinations of vowels and consonants that make up sounds or syllables that are contained in words.





# Kao Un Hungok?

## KUMISIÓN REPORTS TO THE COMMUNITY

This project utilizes social platforms and public media outlets to inform the public about the Kumisión’s programs and products. The growing interest in historically based and culturally respectful material on the indigenous First People of the Mariānas and their living descendants inspires the Kumisión to respond with projects that fill this need.

As an agency of government, we also have a fiduciary responsibility to the public to uphold the trust of being keepers of the legacy of the First People of Guåhan and their descendants. To this end, we are building a virtual CHamoru Archive and redesigning our website to facilitate community public access to CHamoru resources.

We have also prepared a comprehensive report to share the Kumisión’s progress since its establishment. Entitled, *Kao Un Hungok?*, the report provides an overall summary of the Kumisión’s Strategic Priorities contained in its Strategic Master Plan or Maga’plānu accomplishments thus far; and, a brief description of projects that are ongoing or being planned to accomplish our mandates.



# Ineyak Fino' CHamoru Para i Famagu'on

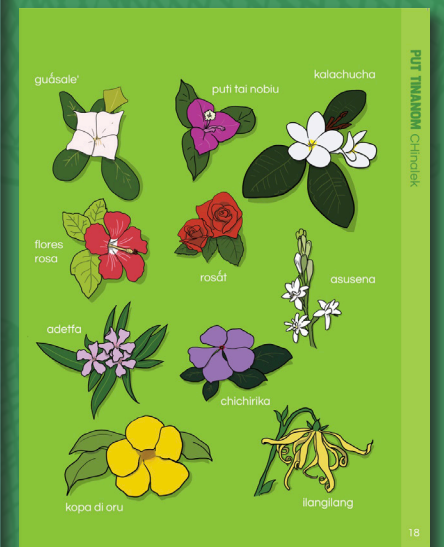
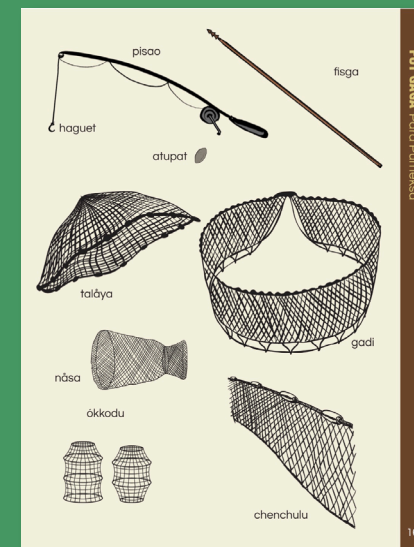
## CHILDREN'S CHAMORU LANGUAGE Pictionary, VOL I & II

This publication was the first in a series of learning tools that the Kumisión developed and published as part of its mission to revitalize the teaching and learning of the CHamoru language, especially for young speakers.

Volume I was published in 2018 and widely distributed to public and private elementary schools and daycare centers throughout the island. It was reprinted by popular demand in 2020. It familiarizes children with CHamoru words and phrases representing the ocean and land environment in which they live and the relationships and key actions and activities that young children engage in as a fun way of inspiring children to speak CHamoru. The work showcased island artists: Nathalia Pereda, Jack Bevacqua, Jessika Merrill, Austin Domingo, and our graphic artists Angelana B. Sablan and Mariam Kristina Alam.

A second Pictionary has been developed in-house by the Kumisión members and staff. Volume II is geared toward elementary and middle school students. It will be released in 2024.

There are plans for future releases of additional volumes.





# KAO UN TUNGO'?

1

## What is the value of the CHamoru Language in the 21st century?

Language is the umbilical cord to culture. The CHamoru language and culture has evolved and thrived for 3,500 to 4,000 years through natural disaster, colonization, disease, and war. The way of life and beliefs of our ancestors are encoded in our language, customs, and traditions. Preserving and perpetuating our language for future generations, as 150 generations of the First People of Guåhan and the Northern Mariånas have done, is invaluable and must be continued. Let it never be said that our generation severed this vital link to our indigenous peoplehood.

3

## Is CHamoru a dead language?

No, its current vibrancy, the capacity to assimilate new words and adapt to new realities are clear manifestations that it is a dynamic, living language. CHamoru has, however, been categorized as nearing extinction as an indigenous language, because it is not widely spoken intergenerationally at this time. Most speakers are over 65 years of age. That is changing as robust efforts to produce children and young adult speakers through language revitalization programs are being implemented.

2

## Isn't CHamoru a dialect of Spanish?

No, CHamoru is a unique and separate indigenous language that has its origins in the group of Asian-Pacific languages labeled Austronesian. Because of our nearly 400-year history as a Spanish colony, many words in CHamoru, as it is spoken today, are borrowed from other languages, including English. Language Lexicographer Kory Stamper explains that “loanwords make up 80% of English.” While a substantial number of words in Modern CHamoru are loanwords, they become CHamoru-rized easily using the rules embedded in *Utugrafihan CHamoru Guåhan*.

4

## Why change the spelling system?

As we move from being an oral language to teaching CHamoru as a second language through reading and writing, it is important to create a uniform way of spelling that CHamoru language learners can use in their journey to become fluent speakers. The spelling system here, which is known as Guåhan's CHamoru Orthography, seeks to standardize spelling. The rules and sounds of the CHamoru language are embedded in the language itself. How words are pronounced gives us the clues that we need to write the ancestral language of the Taotao Tåno' in a consistent format using linguistic terms and structures to guide the process.



5

### Is the “old” way of spelling wrong?

The “old” way of spelling is also referred to as the pre-orthographic way of writing in CHamoru. Because CHamoru was a spoken language, not a written language until recently, when speakers wrote in CHamoru they spelled phonetically using English or Spanish writing canons. There was no standard established for spelling in CHamoru until the 1970s and 80s. Some claim that there is no need to standardize spelling. After all, they point out, our ancestors didn’t talk about rules. Our elders who speak CHamoru fluently may not cite the rules or explain the rules, but they know the correct usage. First language speakers of CHamoru intuitively know the rules and how to apply them.

Why don’t we just let people who want to write in CHamoru do it the way it has been done in the past? Because we now have written rules, which are designed to help second language learners and encourage literacy. The reason for standardization is also tied to teaching current and future generations Fino’ CHamoru, as a second language, in English medium schools. Additionally, a uniform spelling code becomes even more essential as we expand immersion programs from pre-school through college using CHamoru as the primary medium of instruction.

6

### Are the CHamoru materials produced by the Catholic Church and other religions misspelled?

Many of the materials in CHamoru that are printed and circulated are not aligned with the Orthography. Spanish priests, particularly Pålé’ Román de Vera in the early 1900s, documented a significant collection of novenas, prayers, and hymns in CHamoru. He spelled and wrote these materials using the Spanish spelling canon, which was familiar to him. Many of his works and the translations of the Bible, the CHamoru Mass, and the Lectionary used in the Catholic Church were written prior to the standardization of spelling using the Orthography. These written sources are precious and valuable for the rich content they provide about how things were said. They contain beautiful metaphors and words that have fallen into disuse. The Kumisión is making great efforts to restore the use of these terms. We are also engaged in aligning novenas, prayers, and hymns with the Guåhan Orthography for greater reading ease.

7

### Which CHamoru Dictionary is best to use?

There are several published CHamoru dictionaries available. All offer definitions and examples of usage of words. The two most readily available are the CHAMORRO-ENGLISH DICTIONARY by Donald M. Topping, Pedro M. Ogo, and Bernadita C. Dungca published by the University Press of Hawaii in 1975 and the Official CHAMORRO-ENGLISH Dictionary published by the Department of CHamoru Affairs under the guidance of Katherine B. Aguon in 2009. The *UmeyakCHamoru.com* website uses both in its platform. There are variations in the way some CHamoru words are spelled. This has raised many questions about which is correct.

To address these inconsistencies which do cause confusion, the Kumisión has embarked on developing a digital word finder that will be launched on our website upon its completion. We are hopeful that such tools will provide the consistency and alignment necessary for standardized spelling. The best practice is to learn and use the orthography. We exist to help facilitate that process.

8

### Did the University of Hawaii develop the grammar for the CHamoru Language?

CHamoru first language speakers throughout the Mariånas are the source of knowledge about the grammar of the CHamoru language. With the assistance of the late Bernadita C. Dungca, an outspoken advocate for the CHamoru language, Donlad M. Topping, a linguist at the University of Hawaii in Manoa, studied and documented rules which are inherent in the spoken language and evident in related languages. Together, they wrote the CHAMORRO REFERENCE GRAMMAR published by the University Press of Hawaii in 1973.



9

Is Chamorro the English way to spell CHamoru?

Chamorro is a Spanish word. It is the term that was introduced by the Spanish during the colonial period to refer to the indigenous inhabitants, or Taotao Tåno', of the islands of Låguas and Gåni, which later became known as the Mariåna Islands. The Northern Mariånas have chosen to keep the Spanish spelling of the term. Guåhan's spelling has been CHamorurized in accordance with the rules of our Orthography.

10

What will cause the demise of the CHamoru way of life?

The CHamoru way of life is sustained and nourished by the CHamoru language. When a language disappears, the culture attached to the language disappears several generations later. This pattern holds true for the thousands of indigenous languages that have already disappeared. The United Nations reports that an indigenous language becomes extinct in the world every two weeks. This is a stark warning to those of us whose Mother Tongue is CHamoru. If we don't speak it, we will lose it, and eventually the CHamoru culture will cease to exist. We can prevent this from happening by learning to speak, speaking CHamoru wherever and whenever we can and teaching it to the next generation.

RETHINKING OUR REALITY

The law establishing CHamoru as one of the official languages of Guam is enshrined in Title I, Chapter 7 Sections 706 and 707 of the Guam Annotated Code as follows:

§ 706. Official Languages.

English and Chamorro are the official languages of Guam, provided, however, that the Chamorro language shall not be required for official recording of public acts and transactions.

SOURCE: Former Government Code § 3000.

COMMENT: Former Govt. Code § 3000, as originally enacted in 1952, was a prohibition against the use of Chamorro by government employees, hence its placement in Title 4 of the Govt. Code. However, with its amendment by P.L. 12-132 in 1974, the scope of the Section was enlarged to provide a scope which is island-wide. Therefore, this Section is being placed in this Title as a provision of general coverage, together with new § 707, which complements it.

§ 707. English Version Controls.

Wherever there is found to exist a material difference between the English version and Chamorro version of any law or public document, the English version shall be held to be binding.

SOURCE: New Section. From § 1-13, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

COMMENT: While this question has not arisen to date, the adoption of amended Section 3000 of the Government Code (§ 706 of this Title) makes it seem wise to add a section dealing with the conflicts that will inevitably arise. One change from the Hawaiian law has been made. Where Hawaii involves only a "radical or irreconcilable" conflict, the Commission recommends that the English version prevail in case of only "material" difference. The term "material" has been adequately defined by the courts and seems a better standard to commence with. Hawaii, of course, has its own long history of dual languages to rely upon. Guam has none, at least legally.

The term CHamoru needs to reflect the orthographically aligned and official spelling of the word in this section of the Code. Further, we are challenged to assert that CHamoru is as important as English to the people of Guåhan as it is the indigenous language of the First People of the land. As such, this parity should unequivocally be reflected in the law.



# UNESCO LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT FRAMEWORK

Two commonly used scales to evaluate the vitality of the language comes from a UNESCO panel in 2003. One of the most frequent factors people emphasize is the number of speakers. For many, the number of speakers is the most important factor attributed to the strength of a language. However, this is not the case. While the number of speakers of the language is important, it must not be considered the most important or the only factor to take into consideration for a language’s health. Thus, UNESCO’s Ad Hoc Group created a document titled “Language vitality and endangerment” in 2003. In this document, nine factors were used to determine language vitality. The first is:

## Intergenerational Language Transmission

This refers to the extent in which the language is being passed down by speakers to the next generation. For many endangered languages, this becomes a significant problem, especially when paired with colonial language attitudes that paint the indigenous language as antithetical to progress.

Degree of Endangerment	Scores	Intergenerational Language Transmission
Safe	5	The language is spoken by all generations; intergenerational transmission is uninterrupted
Unsafe	4	Most children speak the language, but it may be restricted to certain domains (e.g. home)
Definitively Endangered	3	Children no longer learn the language as the mother tongue in the home
Severely Endangered	2	The language is spoken by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may understand it, they do not speak it to children or among themselves.
Critically Endangered	1	The younger speakers are grandparents and older, and they only speak the language partially and infrequently.
Extinct	0	There are no speakers left.

The sixth factor relates to:

## Materials for Language Education and Literacy

This factor looks towards education and inquires on the scale of materials developed for education. Since literacy is tied to social and economic development, the target language should also be included in the determination of literacy.

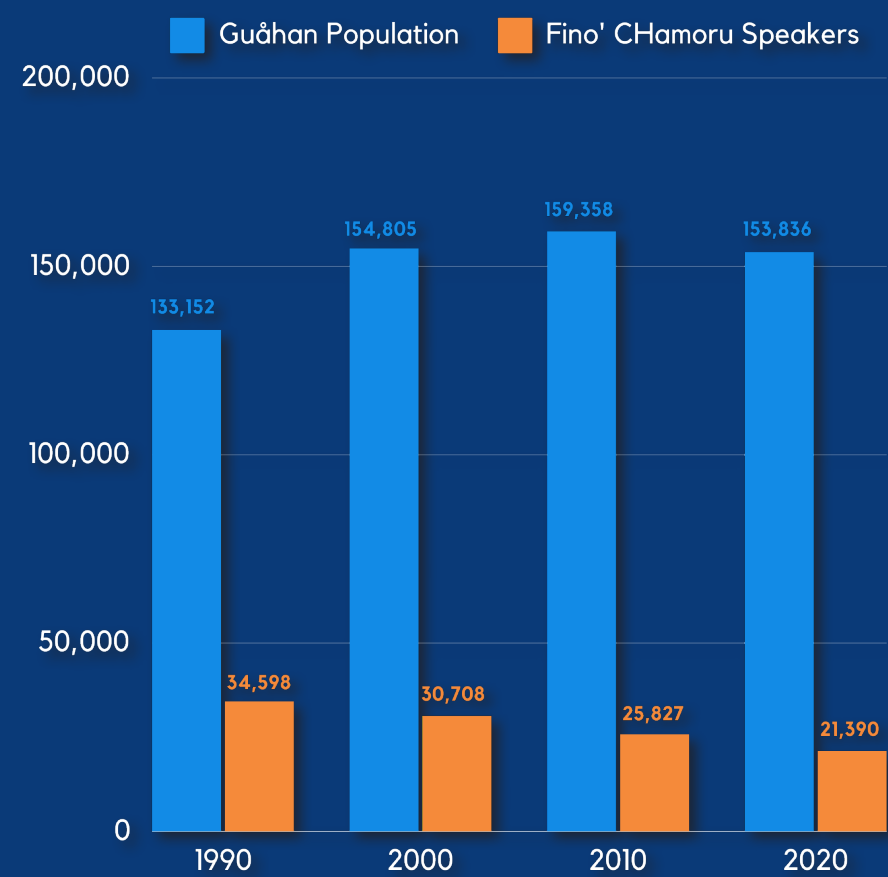
Score	Accessibility of Written Materials
5	There is an established orthography, literacy tradition with grammar, dictionaries, texts, literature, and everyday media. Writing in the language is used in administration and education.
4	Written materials exist, and at school, children are developing literacy in the language. Writing in the language is not used in administration.
3	Written materials exist and children may be exposed to the written form at school. Literacy is not promoted through print media.
2	Written materials exist, but they may only be useful for some members of the community; and for others, they may have a symbolic significance. Literacy education in the language is not a part of the school curriculum.
1	A practical orthography is known to the community and some material is being written.
0	No orthography available to community

Source: Kumisión’s Language Revitalization Study, 2022



# THE NUMBERS WE CANNOT IGNORE

US CENSUS DATA ON NUMBER OF CHAMORU SPEAKERS



Between 1990 and 2000 **loss of 3,890 speakers**  
Between 2000 and 2010 **loss of 4,881 speakers**  
Between 2010 and 2020 **loss of 4,437 speakers**

As of 2020 we have **21,390** speakers.  
Most speakers are over the age of **65**.

If this trend continues by **2060** CHamoru will no longer be spoken.

# ALIGAO HAM

## CONTACT US





NA'KAHÅYA  
I FINO' I  
MAÑAINA-TA

