

Pacific Islands Committee

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2019



A Word from the Chair

The mission of the Pacific Islands Committee is to help improve the administration of justice in the United States territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republics of Palau and the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. Working almost exclusively with the state-level courts of these jurisdictions, our committee develops and presents a variety of judicial education and court professional training programs via grants from the U.S. Department of the Interior. We also collaborate with the Pacific Judicial Council, an organization of judicial officers from several island nations.



Circuit Judge M. Margaret McKeown has chambers in San Diego.

The Pacific Islands Committee assists in the development and delivery of training throughout the territories and freely associated states of Micronesia, Palau, and the Marshall Islands. This has been a busy year for the committee. In 2019, we provided leadership training for court clerks who work in supervisory and lead roles, a judicial writing workshop, trauma training for judges, and a workshop for court interpreters. We also partner with the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawai'i to provide a series of five week-long courses for judges who do not hold a law degree.

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The Honorable Mayceleen JD Anson

The Honorable Mayceleen JD Anson, fondly known as "Macy," is the first woman justice to be appointed to the Pohnpei Supreme Court.

Macy is the proud daughter of parents who worked hard to take care of her and her eight siblings. Her loving father worked diligently as a public servant, holding several high government positions, including that of Pohnpei governor. Her stern and caring mother devoted her life to raising their nine children.

Although both her parents received no formal education, Macy followed a different path. After graduation from Pohnpei Island Central High School in 1978, she enrolled in the Community College of Micronesia where she pursued training in the nursing and education fields. After receiving her



The Honorable Mayceleen JD Anson is a justice on the Pohnpei Supreme Court.



Frances Tydingco-Gatewood is chief district judge for the District of Guam

Associate of Arts degree in these areas, Macy pursued her Bachelor of Arts degree, 3,245 miles away from her island home. Macy enrolled at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo to pursue and eventually receive a B.A. psychology. She traveled to Honolulu to pursue medical training at the University of Hawai'i for a year before returning to Pohnpei to care for her ailing mother.

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In March, our education specialist, Russ Mathieson and I traveled to Washington, D.C., to meet with Assistant Secretary Doug Domenech and the program staff, who oversee the training grants, of the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs. We provided a detailed report on the use of training funds for fiscal year 2018 and updated them on training plans for fiscal year 2019. These meetings allow us to discuss the importance and impact of these training funds on the region and identify issues that may need more attention.

While in Washington, we also met with Representative Gregorio Sablan, the delegate for the Northern Marianas Islands, and the newly-elected Representative Michael San Nicolas of Guam to provide them an update on our work. Both delegates had positive feedback for the work of the committee does and its impact on the courts in these communities.

It is important to note that we are approaching the final years of funding for the Pacific Islands Judicial Programs. The funding for training in the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands was established by the Compact of Free Association (2003) and funded through 2023 “to promote the development of the people of the Trust Territory toward self-government or independence as appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Trust Territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned.” A companion technical assistance grant has been offered to provide judicial training in Palau, American Samoa, Northern Marianas Islands and Guam.

As we approach the final years of the training grants, we hope to balance ongoing training needs of these diverse judiciaries as we also develop trainings to promote self-governance and independence.



Representative Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan of the Northern Mariana Islands, pictured top left with Circuit Judge M. Margaret McKeown and Russ Mathieson, education specialist. Judge McKeown and Mr. Mathieson also visited Representative Michael San Nicolas of Guam, above, on their trip to Washington, D.C.

While Macy held the background and education to pursue work in the area of public health administration, her destiny would take her on a very different path of public service. She worked full time during the day as a legal aide and later as a legal assistant for the Pohnpei State Legislature. In that position, she staffed nine legislative committees, drafted proposed legislation for the legislators, and prepared legislative resolutions amongst many other duties. When her day job ended, Macy then embarked on more educational opportunities. She took trial counseling classes at the College of Micronesia where she eventually graduated from there as a trial lawyer. She was sworn in by the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) Supreme Court as an FSM attorney, then promoted to staff counsel for the Pohnpei State Legislature, where she worked until her appointment to the Pohnpei Supreme Court.

Grateful for the honor of being the first woman jurist to sit on Pohnpei's highest court, Macy recalls the long and challenging road to her appointment. Macy underwent three confirmation hearings before finally receiving the confirmation and support of the Pohnpei Legislature in 2009. Even then, Macy felt unwelcome in what was a male dominated judiciary. Soon after she began her work on the bench, the community began to recognize her not only as a woman associate justice, but as a fair and dedicated jurist. A very humble woman, Macy felt that despite the obstacles she faced, she is fortunate to have been appointed and confirmed as the very first woman supreme court associate justice of her island.

What does she like best about her judicial job? Macy says, "helping people, solving problems, and feeling gratified that I have done the best job that I can for those who come before me."

What does she do for fun? Macy is not only an esteemed jurist, she is also an avid gardener and farmer and loves to plant breadfruit, pineapple, sugar cane, cucumber, and many other fruits and vegetables. She also enjoys courtroom and law related movies on YouTube.

Other interesting facts? Macy is bilingual and speaks Pohnpeian and English. She also understands Mokolese, a dialect in Pohnpei.

Macy is a proud mother of four children – two girls and two boys – and hopes that her work ethic and commitment to family will inspire them to achieve their own goals. Her youngest son currently serves in the United States Armed Forces.

Macy says that she owes her success to her Protestant faith and her devoted father. She is active in her women's group at her church where she receives endless support. Her father, a longtime public servant, greatly influenced her to study hard, work hard, and be the best she could be. As a daughter of Pohnpei and the first woman justice on the Pohnpei Supreme Court, she has indeed followed in her father's footsteps as an honorable public servant. ●

In Memory of the Honorable Eneriko M. Ekiek

August 7, 1956 -April 12, 2019



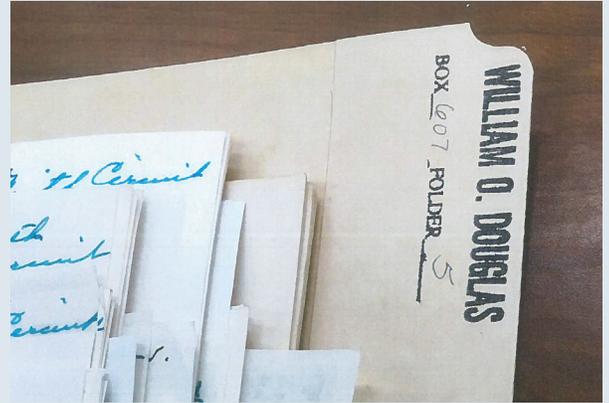
The Honorable Eneriko M. Ekiek was born in Pohnpei State in the Federated States of Micronesia and proudly served his country, his state and his municipality with honor until he fell ill and passed away while on official training in Reno, Nevada, on April 12, 2019.

Prior to Associate Justice Ekiek's appointment to the Pohnpei Supreme Court in 2018, he was appointed twice as chief justice of Nett Municipal/District Court and served two consecutive terms from 2008 to 2018. Justice Ekiek's public service career spanned 26 years in various capacities, including as the principle clerk for Pohnpei Court of Land Tenure, from 2004 to 2008, and as state justice ombudsman for the Supreme Court of the Federated States of Micronesia from 1993 to 2004.

Justice Ekiek earned a bachelor's degree in political science with an emphasis on criminal justice from Eastern New Mexico University in 1987.

Justice Ekiek is survived by his wife of over 30 years, Dr. Mayleen Jack Ekiek; their children, Eneriko Junior, Stephanie, Maylani, Maria Linda, and Megan; and three grandchildren. ●

On a final note, I wanted to share a piece of history. Justice William O. Douglas was the circuit justice for the Ninth Circuit for many years. While doing some research in his files in the Manuscript Room of the Library of Congress, I learned that the justice was familiar with the relationship between the Ninth Circuit and the former Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, which comprised of some 2,000 islands under the administration of the United States. On one occasion, Judge Paul D. Shriver of Guam asked Justice Douglas "to make a study of the Trust Territory . . . using Guam as a base for such a study." Unfortunately, Justice Douglas declined because of a planned trip to Pakistan. The 1957 correspondence is reproduced here.



DISTRICT COURT OF GUAM
AGANA, GUAM

D. SHRIVER, JUDGE

March 21, 1957

Honorable William O. Douglas
Justice, Supreme Court of the United States
Supreme Court Building
Washington 13, D. C.

Dear Justice Douglas:

You may recall that during the Ninth Circuit Conference last year, I expressed the hope to you that you might find it possible to make a study of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, using Guam as a base for such a study.

You will recall that the United States is the trustee for the United Nations of this area comprising approximately 600 square miles of land in an ocean area of approximately 3,000,000 square miles. The area is administered by the Trust Territory organization with headquarters in Guam, except for the islands of Saipan and Tinian which are administered by the United States Navy. You are familiar with their modern history, including the mandate to Japan by the League of Nations and the subsequent fortifications of many of the islands by Japan.

The reason I am writing to you at this time is that the High Commissioner, D. H. Nucker, left Guam yesterday for a major operation to be performed at the United States Naval Hospital in Bethesda, where he will be for three weeks to a month. Mr. Nucker is an outstandingly fine gentleman and an able administrator; if you can be induced to visit the Trust Territories, he will be in a position to furnish complete information. I only wish to add that Mrs. Shriver and I will be happy to have you as our guest while in Guam and if Mrs. Douglas accompanies you, she could spend as much or as little time as she desires in the Trust Territories and remain with us in Guam while you are gone.

With kindest personal regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,
Paul D. Shriver

October 8, 1959

The Honorable William O. Douglas
Circuit Justice of the Ninth Circuit
Supreme Court of the United States
Supreme Court Building
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Justice Douglas:

Please be informed that I have been appointed by the President of the United States and confirmed by the Senate of the United States as Judge of the District Court of Guam; that the oath of office was administered to me in Washington, D. C. on September 15, 1959 at 9:00 A. M.

Respectfully yours,
Eugene R. Gilmartin
Eugene R. Gilmartin
Judge

Dear Judge Gilmartin:

Welcome aboard the Ninth Circuit! We are glad to have you with us, and hope very much that you will enjoy your service on the Bench.

Yours faithfully,

Honorable Eugene R. Gilmartin
District Court of Guam
Agana, Guam



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