



PRESS RELEASE

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5 UOG students earn internships at a leading national lab in renewable energy

A grant funded by the U.S. Department of Energy will be sending five University of Guam students to the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) in Richland, Washington for a 10-week immersive research experience this summer.

Their internships are the result of a partnership between the University of Guam and PNNL and funding from U.S. DOE through the Basic Energy Sciences – Reaching a New Energy Sciences Workforce (BES-RENEW) grant. The grant fosters mentoring to undergraduate students in their pursuit of a career in STEM-related fields.

“We have advanced our ecosystem of support for student researchers, with faculty providing mentorship and paths to internship opportunities,” said UOG President Anita Borja Enriquez. “We have scientists in the making at UOG and, along with our future nurses, teachers, social workers, and engineers, they will one day become part of our professional workforce on the island and region.”

Dr. Pamela Peralta, Interim Vice Provost, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs who also is the Director of Contracts and Grants at UOG, said the students will receive hands-on training while they learn about cutting-edge scientific research and technology.

“They will be learning alongside PNNL's great minds in renewable and clean energy and will bring back home their knowledge about climate change and sustainable energy,” according to Dr. Peralta.

Dr. John Limtiaco, a UOG Chemistry Professor, said, “These students will learn important research and laboratory skills while making lasting personal and professional connections.” He also honed his knowledge about renewable energy at PNNL last summer.

The five UOG students come from different backgrounds in their pursuit of a STEM education.

Hallie Hainrik, a freshman majoring in biology, works with the 4H program at UOG and finds joy in sharing science with kindergarten to 12th-grade students whose eyes light up when she performs simple experiments with them.

Irish Fontanilla, a sophomore working on a pre-med track, said she will use the internship experience to help her define her career goals.

Cassandra Paule, a junior pursuing a dual major in biology-chemistry, aspires to work in the renewable energy field.

Tristan Pajela, a senior studying civil engineering, wants to incorporate the fields of engineering and alternative energy in his future career.

Brandon Respicio, a senior pursuing a bachelor's in education, wants to learn more about mathematics and programming in data analysis to solve real-world problems.

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Photo captions:

2024-pnnl-internships

University of Guam students, from left, Hallie Hainrik, Irish Fontanilla, Tristan Pajela, Brandon Respicio and Cassandra Paule are heading to a 10-week summer internship at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. UOG announced on Friday, Feb. 9, they have been selected for the internship.

2024-pnnl-internships

The University of Guam students heading to Pacific Northwest National Laboratory for a summer internship are, fifth from left, Hallie Hainrik, Irish Fontanilla, Tristan Pajela, Cassandra Paule and Brandon Respicio. Joining them are Dr. John Limtiaco, Chemistry Professor; Dr. Cheryl Sanguenza, mentor; Olympia Terral, Extension Associate; Senior Vice President and Provost Sharleen Santos Bamba; UOG President Anita Borja Enriquez; Dr. Pamela Peralta, Interim Vice Provost; and Cathleen Moore-Lin, Executive Director of the Research Corporation of the University of Guam.