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Date: September 11, 2010

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Guam Humanities Council Receives NEH *We The People* Grant for Community Projects Focusing Experiences of Guam's Micronesian Communities

The Guam Humanities Council has received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities *We The People Initiative* for a new project entitled, "*The Micronesian Question: Issues of Migration, Identity and Belonging on Guam*". The migration of Micronesians to Guam over the past twenty years has presented a number of perceived challenges to the larger Guam community that have focused on such complex, and oftentimes contested issues as adaptation, discrimination and identity.

With this project, the Council will focus on the many issues surrounding the migration of islanders from other parts of Micronesia to Guam. The lives and experiences of Micronesians in their new island "home" will also be explored. The project will be multifaceted in scope and include the Council's Motherhead family literacy program, a series of film and discussion and reading and discussion events, a youth-centered photography and creative writing project and community conversations using the civic reflection model. Given the anticipated migration to Guam of several thousand people largely from the US mainland, Hawaii and Asia as part of the planned military expansion that is set to begin in 2010, the project is especially timely.

The youth-centered photography and creative writing component of the project, part of which will be funded through a grant from the Guam Council on Arts and Humanities Agency, has the objective of giving voice to youth of immigrant, specifically Micronesian, communities through the visual medium of photography and the writing of personal and/or community narratives. Fifty (50) youth will be selected to participate in photography and creative writing workshops to learn to tell their stories visually and in writing about making Guam "home." The culmination of their work will be an exhibition of selected photographs and associated writings that will travel throughout the island.

The project begins with the youth component and the Council is presently conducting outreach efforts to recruit participants. Workshops are free and limited to registered participants. To find out more information, contact the Guam Humanities Council.

The Guam Humanities Council is a non-profit organization that provides foundational support and educational programs for the people of Guam. The mission of the Guam Humanities Council is to foster community engagement and dialogue, inspire critical thinking, celebrate diversity and enrich the quality of life of island residents through the power of the humanities.

We the People is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities that supports projects that strengthen the teaching, study and understanding of American history and culture. Previous GHC projects funded by *We the People* grants include *Families Under Siege: Stories of Family Life in Japanese Occupied Guam* (2004), *A Journey Home: Camp Roxas and Filipino American History in Guam* (2006) and for Guampedia, *Religion's Role in Guam History* (2005) and *The US Territory of Guam, "Where America's Day Begins"* (2007). A concurrent Council project funded through the *We the People* initiative is *"8,000 – How Will It Change Our Lives?" Community Conversations on the US Military Buildup in Guam*.

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