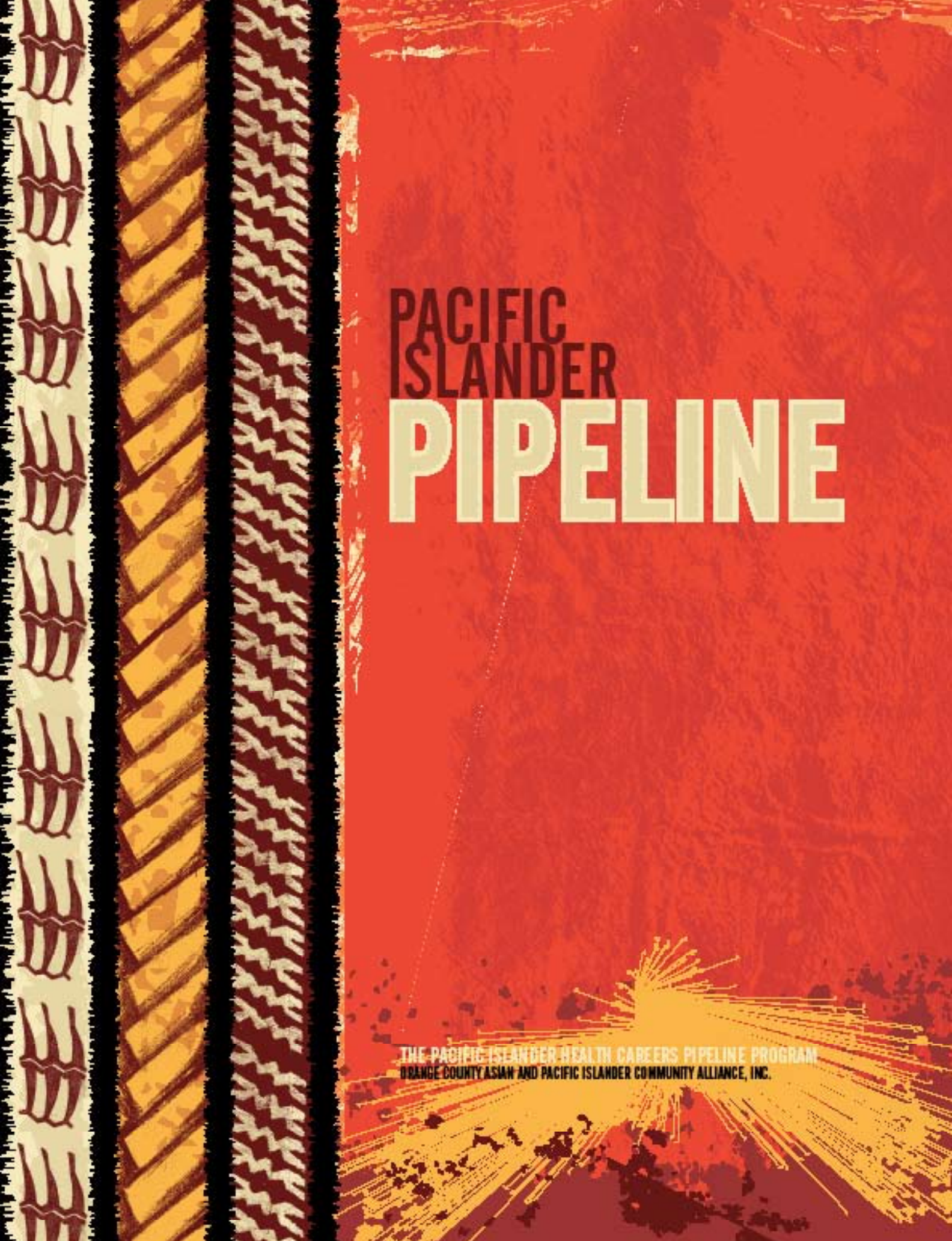
PACIFIC
ISLANDER
PIPELINE
THE PACIFIC ISLANDER HEALTH CAREERS PIPELINE PROGRAM
ORANGE COUNTY ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITY ALLIANCE, INC.

Dedication to Our Ancestors

Blanketed by the blinding blackness, lured by the lulling whispers of the wind and coveted by the hunger of the blue abyss, their majestic voices in unison chant summoned the stars as kings their servants. Their voices enraptured strength, their hands clubbed in unity, their feet grounded in duty, their hearts sang of pride and they found a way home... Oceania. As children of moana, who hail from fiery lava carried atop velvet waves, our forbearers fished our lands from the depths, placed the stars as their guide and breathed mana into our souls, these chants linger in our cores and long for another rise in our unifying voices.

Our Pasifika people have been in this country for several decades, we have continued to let the wind choose as to the quickness, or lack thereof, of our canoes. Statistically, we do not fall far from the very bottom of each category that notes excellence and success. Equally, we are top-tier in all interpretations of malady and lack. Whether we are reaping what the system has given us or trapped by self-infliction, there is a need for movement. The Pacific Islander Health Careers Pipeline Program is creating waves and directing winds that will steer our course according to the stars that noble leaders before us have placed.

With respect, we hereby ask, for the blessings of those who paved the way, those whose wisdom feeds us, and those whose knowledge will continue to navigate our venture in this land. As we tow together to carry this generation, our voices will be strengthened, our efforts united, and our duties grounded in pride because of the torches you have ignited to light our paths, the oars you have shaped to weather the storms, and the leis of love and support that have embraced us as your descendants. In your honor and in tribute of the past and future legacy of our people, we will rise and shape the wave that will map the skies for generations to follow.

Alisi Tulua-Tata

THE PACIFIC ISLANDER HEALTH CAREERS PIPELINE PROGRAM

Report on Educational Barriers, Needs, and Recommendations

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I. Executive Summary

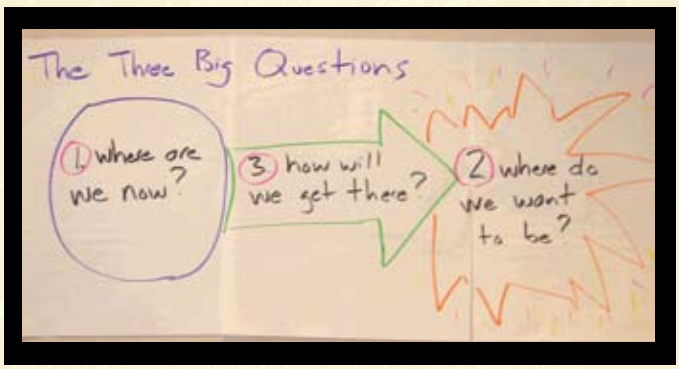
Mary Anne Foo, MPH
Executive Director

For minority populations, education is a central source of empowerment. Pacific Islanders (PI) fare worse than the general population in most socio-economic indicators which in turn, significantly contributes to the disparity in educational attainment between PIs and their White and Asian American counterparts. The PI community also suffers disproportionately from illnesses and diseases, including diabetes, heart disease and cancer. While there are tremendous health needs within the PI community, there are few health care providers from the community that exist to help address these particular needs.

The Pacific Islander Health Careers Pipeline Program (PIHCPP) was established to increase the number of Pacific Islander health care providers and health related professionals by increasing access and preparation to educational and health career opportunities for young PIs. The PIHCPP conducted a needs assessment, which captured detailed findings, included in this report, about health and educational access issues among Chamorro, Marshallese, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, and Tongan youth in Southern California. This report provides an in-depth, qualitative assessment from adult and youth key informants regarding the various environmental, structural, socio-economic, and social challenges to attaining higher education as well as the various needs of PI youth as they relate to psychosocial support, retention and recruitment, and health career knowledge and access. Also included in this report are personal stories from community members who have faced and overcome many challenges to achieving a higher education as well as recommendations for developing, implementing and sustaining a pipeline program and ultimately, increasing the number of PI achieving higher education.

We conducted a total of 26 interviews, which included 11 young adult key informant interviews and 15 adult key informant interviews.

Seven focus groups were conducted with PI youth from diverse ethnic backgrounds, the majority of informants being students.



Overall, informants shared similar concerns and needs. Common themes that arose as being major contributors to the success, or failure, of PI youth in the educational system included: socio-economic status, the surrounding home and school environment, lack of role models (especially of PI descent), competing priorities (family vs. school), culture (beliefs, values and norms), stereotypes and identity issues. Furthermore, findings from interviews and focus groups also reflect how infrastructural support is needed for the PI community, particularly the need for collective efforts to bring greater awareness to educational opportunities and resources for PI youth.

Lastly, our report provides important recommendations and considerations in developing and sustaining a system that promotes and retains PIs in the educational system.

“I erensia, lina’la’, espiritu-ta”

Our heritage gives life to our spirit

[A Chamoru proverb]

Fijian catamarans from Lau are reputed for their reliability. Recognizable by their reddish hulls and their sails in woven fibers, they have been sailing between the islands for over one thousand years.

PHOTO BY ALAIN CHENEVIERE

WHO ARE PACIFIC ISLANDERS?

The population we now call Pacific Islanders (PI) have a long, shared and vexed relationship with the United States. This category includes peoples with origins in the island groups of Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia, including Samoa, Hawai`i, Tonga, Guam, the Marshall Islands, and Fiji.

As early as the mid 1800s, American traders, missionaries and whalers began to forge relationships with independent and internationally recognized sovereign countries, such as the Hawaiian Kingdom and the Tongan Monarchy. Americans, most notably men, likewise negotiated commerce and religion with PIs who were under the control of governments like Germany, Japan and Spain. Guam, for example, was a Spanish colony for several centuries since the 1600s, and the Marshall Islands were under the rule of Germany and, later, Japan. Despite the passage of numerous international treaties and the onset of various nationalist and resistance movements all of which strove for an independent Pacific the United States still found much economic, military and political interest in the Pacific Islands, especially the islands of American Samoa, Guam, and Hawai`i.° From a geopolitical point of view, the Pacific Islands offered the United States greater access to maritime trade routes between Asia and the Americas, as well as a geographical buffer zone from perceived threats in the East. As a result of the Spanish-American War in 1898, then, the United States came to assume formal governmental control of Guam, Hawai`i and American Samoa.° Because of this act of war, itself a colonial process of expansion and conquest, the Chamorros of Guam, the Hawaiians of Hawai`i and the Samoans of American Samoa became subjects what the United States termed "wards" of the American government.

Since that time, PIs have migrated to the continental United States and its territories, settling in areas like Los Angeles and San Diego, California, and Honolulu, Hawai'i.° Most PI migrants were enlisted men in the United States Armed Forces, whereas a few others worked in various plantation and entertainment industries. Today, some PIs are American citizens, whereas others are American Nationals.° Some PIs, such as those from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), hold FSM passports and can travel without restriction and pursue employment and educational opportunities across the United States. Despite their divergent and sometimes overlapping political affiliations, many PI populations, from Fijians to Marshallese to Tongans, seek greater recognition in all spheres of American education, employment, health and politics. While PIs clearly represent diverse ethnic, religious and political backgrounds, they all also share similar cultural values and norms.° These values include a respect and deference for female and male elders, an appreciation for reciprocal labor and time, and an understanding of communal and intergenerational authority. As this report will show, PIs in the continental United States (and in the territories as well) face incredible challenges in the balancing of American and PI belief systems, practices and rules.

According to Census 2000, in the United States, there were approximately 874,000 Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders (NHOPI) — used interchangeably with Pacific Islanders or PIs in this report. This composes about 0.3% of the total population in the U.S., excluding its territories such as Guam, the Marshall Islands, and American Samoa.[1] The largest groups among PIs are Native Hawaiians, Samoans, and Chamorros. Native Hawaiians compose nearly 45% of the PI population in the US.[2] The majority of Pacific Islanders live in Hawai`i and California but also have significant populations in Utah, Texas and Washington.[3]

Although PIs constitute a small percentage of the total population in the U.S., they are also one of the fastest growing groups in this country. PIs more than doubled their population between 1990 and 2000. Between 2000 and 2003, the population continued to grow by 14%, compared to a mere 5% for the general population.[4] Other factors also illustrate PIs as an emerging and a quickly growing population. PIs are generally young. The median age is 29.2 years (compared to 40.1 for non-Hispanic whites) and nearly 30% of the general PI population is under 18.[5] PIs have an average household size of 3.6, while the average household size for the general population is 2.6.[6] In addition, PIs have the highest rate of all racial and ethnic groups to be multi-racial.[7]

The total number of PIs living in California was close to 246,000 in 2000. Between 1990 and 2003, the PI population increased from 0.4% of the State's population to 0.7%. In California, the median age for PIs was 26 years old, with one-third of PIs under the age of 18. The average household size is 3.5, compared to 2.9 for the state. Nearly half (47%) of all PIs in California live in Southern California.[8] Native Hawaiians compose the largest population of PIs in all seven Southern California counties except Los Angeles and San Diego. One half of all Samoans in California live in Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego Counties.

"E lauhoe mai na wa'a; i ke ka, i ka hoe; i ka hoe, i ke ka; pae aku i ka 'aina."

Paddle together, bail, paddle; paddle, bail; paddle towards the land.

[A Native Hawaiian Proverb]

If everybody works together the work will be done quickly.
On interisland trips, the two most important tools
besides the sail were the paddles and the bailer.
In heavy seas, the water would wash over the boat
and so one or more natives would be constantly bailing.
Others would be paddling together on command
to reach their destination in the shortest time.

The PI population also fares worse than the general population in most socio-economic indicators. According to Census 2000, the poverty rate for the PI population in the U.S. in 1999 was 17.7%, compared to only 12.4% in the general population. About 1 in 5 Samoans (20.2%) and Tongans (19.5%) lived below the poverty level at that time (See Figure 1).

According to 2005-2007 American Community Survey, the poverty rate for PI population improved to 16.7% in the U.S. and 12.8% in California. During the same period, the poverty rate for the general population was 13.3% in the U.S. and 13.0% in California.

In California, the poverty rate for the PI population (15.7%) in 1999 was twice as much as that for the non-Hispanic white population (7.8%). In Los Angeles County, over 1 in 4 Samoans (26.8%) and Tongans (28.5%) lived below the poverty level.

Median household income for the PI population in 1999 ($42,717) was comparable to that for the general population ($41,994). However, this could be explained by the higher number of wage earners in PI households. There was a much wider disparity in per capita income. Per capita income for the PI population in 1999 was just over $15,000, compared to over $21,000 for the general population and almost $25,000 for non-Hispanic white population. The per capita income for both Samoans ($12,160) and Tongans ($10,680) in the U.S. was less than half of that for non-Hispanic whites (See Figure 2).

Figure 1.

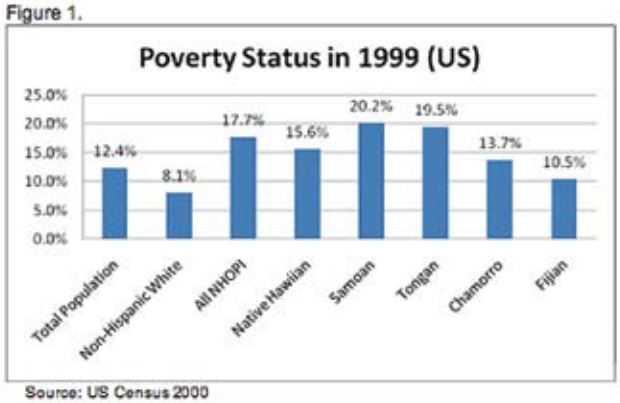
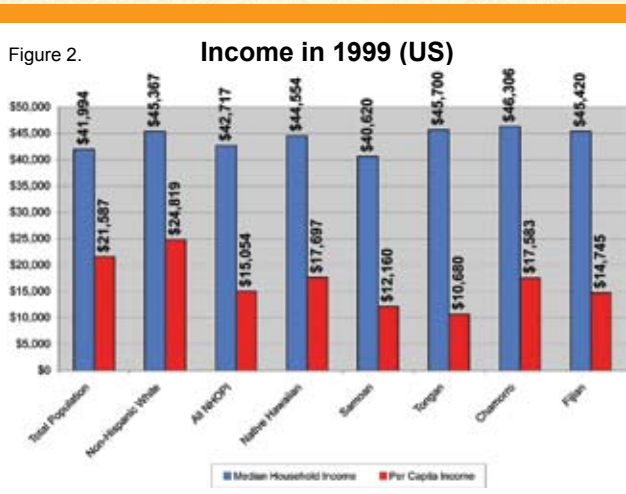


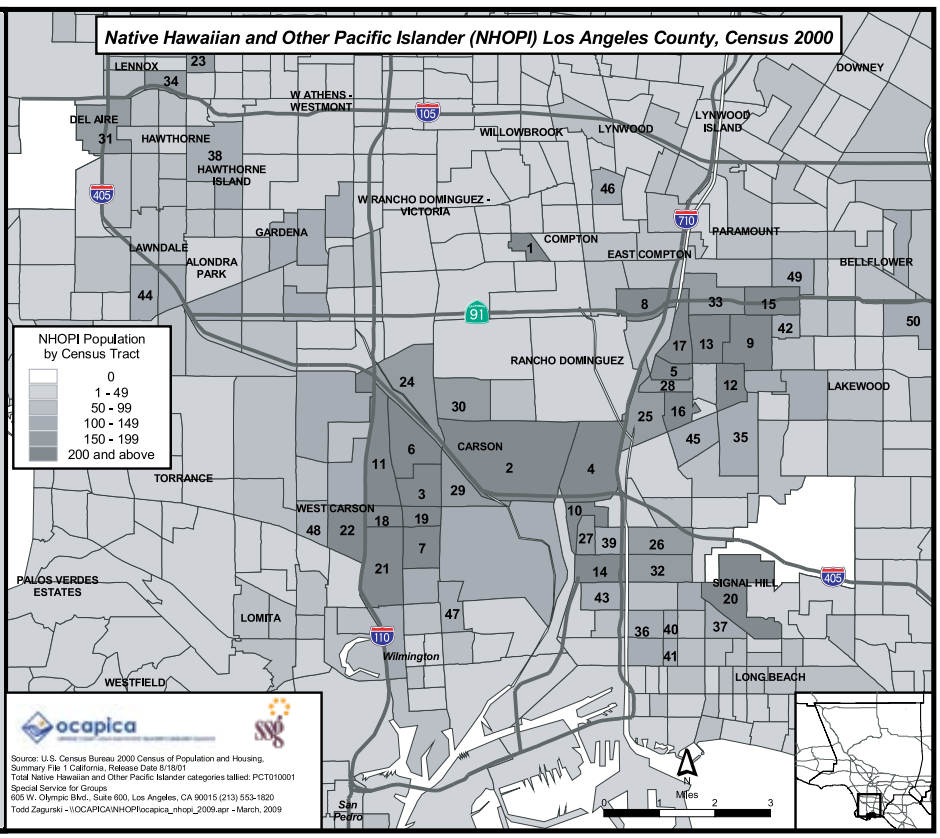
Figure 2.



Pacific Islanders In Southern California

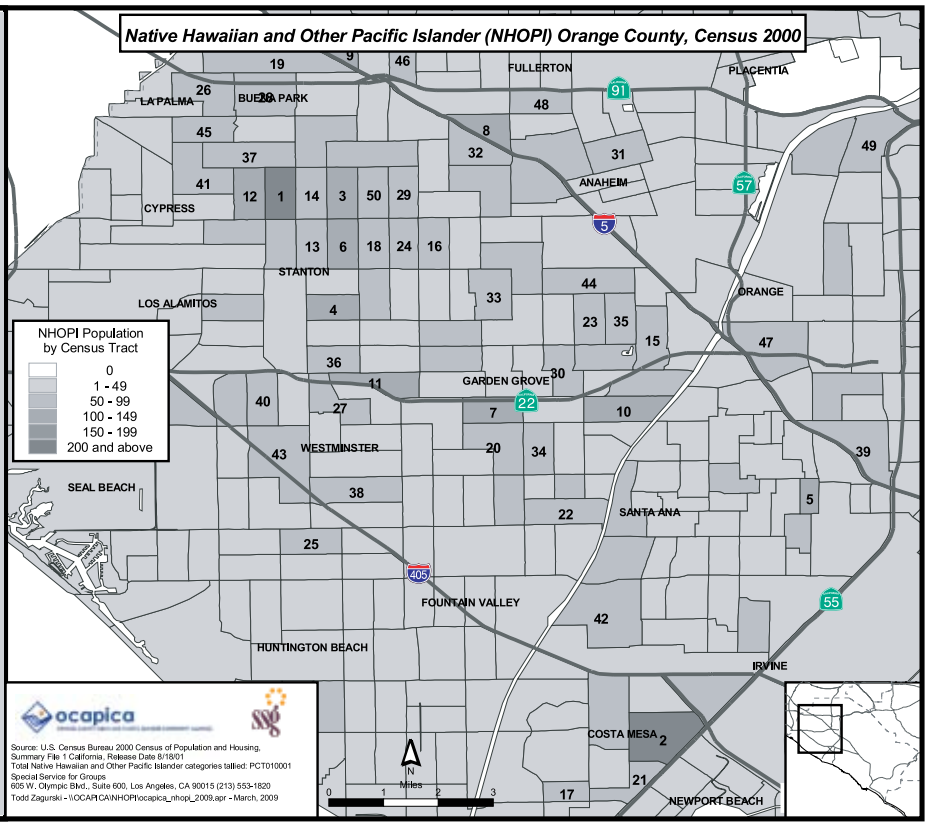
Los Angeles County

Rank	Tract	Total	Native Hawaiian	Samoan	Tongan	Other Polynesian	Guamanian or Chamorro	Other Micronesian	Fijian	Other Melanesian
1	542501	513	5	480	3	2	9	0	0	0
2	543303	444	59	295	0	7	61	0	0	0
3	543802	410	42	323	0	1	18	4	5	0
4	544000	342	44	271	1	5	18	0	0	0
5	570303	301	9	249	17	6	7	0	0	0
6	543801	301	33	237	6	1	16	0	0	0
7	543702	281	29	207	0	1	40	0	0	0
8	570401	267	13	224	18	0	9	0	0	0
9	570502	260	8	146	51	0	9	0	0	0
10	572301	260	25	189	13	6	22	0	0	0
11	543501	256	21	197	3	2	7	0	0	0
12	570602	254	10	123	36	1	16	0	0	0
13	570501	252	26	147	8	22	28	0	0	1
14	572600	244	19	166	0	0	41	0	0	0
15	570203	232	9	200	17	0	4	0	0	0
16	571702	216	5	169	3	0	20	1	2	0
17	570301	214	25	139	4	6	13	0	3	0
18	543601	211	28	152	0	6	6	2	0	0
19	543701	207	17	172	0	0	6	0	0	0
20	573402	204	19	132	11	18	15	0	0	0
21	543604	202	35	108	0	23	14	0	3	0
22	543602	201	53	102	5	4	8	0	0	0
23	601900	189	11	6	149	0	5	0	8	0
24	543400	189	13	146	0	0	10	0	2	0
25	571701	189	14	142	19	0	3	0	0	0
26	572201	180	13	65	15	0	42	1	0	0
27	572500	180	7	154	0	0	13	0	0	0
28	570304	178	7	127	30	0	9	0	0	0
29	543903	174	16	121	0	1	9	0	2	0
30	543322	165	18	113	0	0	11	0	0	0
31	602200	162	12	18	115	0	1	0	13	0
32	572202	159	15	77	6	10	25	0	0	0
33	570202	154	14	87	9	9	6	0	0	0
34	601700	153	1	11	117	17	0	0	0	0
35	571501	149	19	81	12	1	19	0	0	0
36	573001	144	13	103	12	0	14	0	0	0
37	573300	141	4	84	0	8	1	0	0	0
38	602501	137	20	17	68	8	3	0	0	0
39	572302	136	7	69	0	1	26	0	0	0
40	573002	131	8	96	3	5	2	0	0	0
41	575402	130	22	87	12	0	1	0	5	0
42	570204	126	3	107	0	1	12	0	0	0
43	572700	123	7	78	9	0	15	0	0	0
44	604000	123	31	43	21	1	8	0	2	0
45	571502	122	10	72	0	6	6	6	0	0
46	541604	120	1	98	0	1	9	0	0	0
47	294110	118	32	60	0	6	12	0	0	0
48	293202	118	10	81	3	0	10	0	0	0
49	553902	116	9	80	1	5	7	0	0	0
50	554401	116	19	62	11	0	6	0	0	0



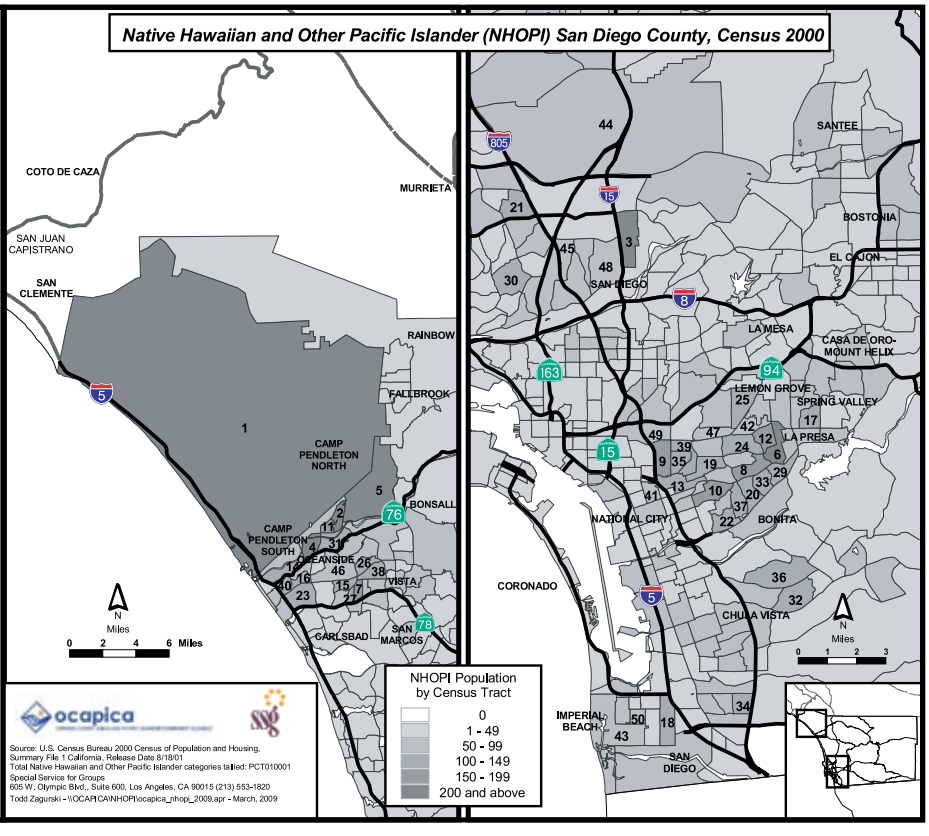
Orange County

Rank	Tract	Total	Native Hawaiian	Samoan	Tongan	Other Polynesian	Guamanian or Chamorro	Other Micronesian	Fijian	Other Melanesian
1	086901	273	8	138	11	16	12	0	4	0
2	063904	215	43	19	0	0	2	172	0	0
3	086903	139	12	93	0	0	14	0	3	0
4	087902	133	14	80	7	2	15	0	0	0
5	074501	121	26	0	0	0	95	0	0	0
6	087803	115	3	48	19	8	20	0	0	0
7	088902	111	15	80	0	0	16	0	0	0
8	086702	110	3	39	9	1	8	0	5	0
9	110603	108	22	36	17	12	13	0	2	0
10	089102	103	12	53	0	5	16	0	0	0
11	088801	102	20	44	0	0	27	0	0	0
12	110202	101	17	22	5	1	14	0	8	0
13	087802	99	27	31	0	0	11	1	0	0
14	086902	98	39	51	0	2	15	0	1	0
15	076103	97	12	58	4	0	2	4	0	0
16	087703	94	16	37	30	0	4	1	0	0
17	063808	94	17	5	4	0	2	41	0	0
18	087805	92	21	57	6	0	2	0	0	0
19	110500	89	15	32	15	0	9	0	4	0
20	088903	87	15	41	0	5	9	0	0	0
21	063906	87	19	20	0	3	7	14	5	0
22	099202	83	20	39	0	0	15	0	0	0
23	088402	82	25	38	4	0	20	0	0	0
24	087806	80	16	38	3	2	5	2	0	0
25	099410	77	19	4	22	11	5	0	0	0
26	110301	77	19	22	7	0	15	0	4	0
27	099801	76	20	62	0	0	0	0	0	0
28	110302	76	14	35	4	1	16	0	0	0
29	087002	76	13	23	4	0	10	0	0	0
30	088501	75	21	41	3	5	6	2	0	0
31	087300	73	3	6	1	5	14	0	0	0
32	087102	72	26	17	21	0	15	0	0	0
33	088301	69	8	31	0	0	8	0	0	0
34	089001	69	25	36	0	0	3	12	2	0
35	088403	68	6	32	4	2	2	0	0	0
36	088106	67	15	46	0	0	6	0	0	0
37	110201	66	5	18	6	1	9	0	0	0
38	099702	66	20	7	0	0	15	0	0	0
39	075403	66	18	29	0	0	6	5	3	0
40	099903	65	13	48	0	0	6	0	0	0
41	110110	65	8	22	8	0	22	0	0	0
42	074106	64	6	32	0	0	15	0	0	0
43	099601	64	10	32	0	0	15	0	0	0
44	087503	63	10	20	7	0	7	0	0	0
45	110304	63	10	10	0	0	10	0	0	0
46	001802	63	18	21	5	1	1	2	0	0
47	076000	62	10	5	6	4	12	0	0	0
48	086601	62	19	29	0	0	9	0	0	0
49	076202	62	17	19	6	0	3	0	0	0
50	087001	60	20	25	1	0	12	0	3	0



San Diego County

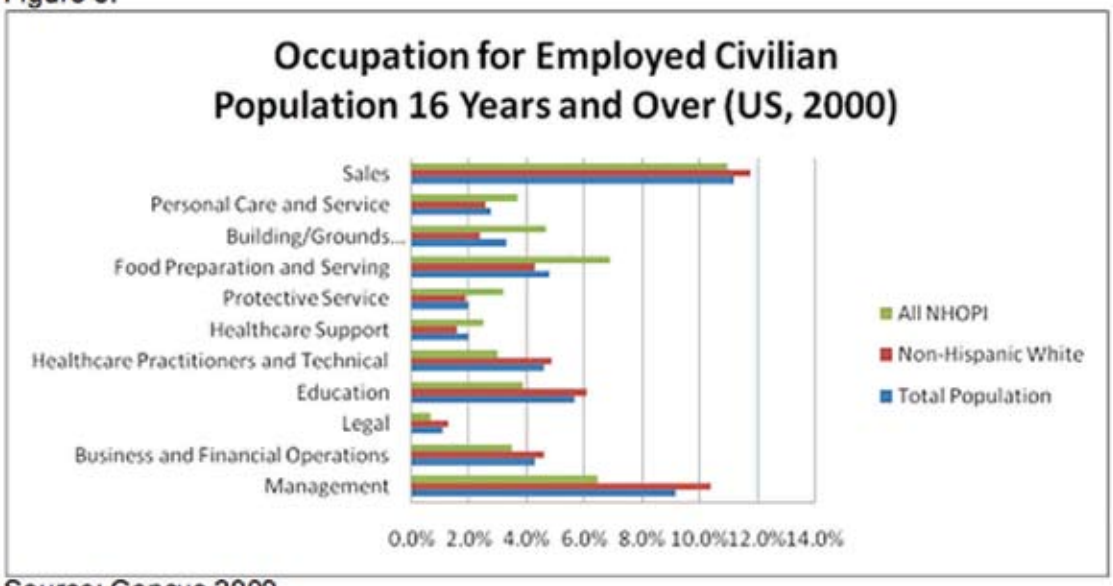
Rank	Tract	Total	Native Hawaiian	Samoan	Tongan	Other Polynesian	Guamanian or Chamorro	Other Micronesian	Fijian	Other Melanesian
1	018700	364	109	52	9	1	93	29	5	0
2	018610	350	65	235	0	0	36	0	2	0
3	009508	260	88	49	4	11	66	14	0	0
4	018607	239	60	109	0	6	45	0	0	0
5	018611	228	30	154	3	2	35	1	0	0
6	003107	201	28	27	0	15	114	0	0	0
7	018519	184	26	114	5	0	21	1	0	0
8	003115	171	12	16	0	0	138	0	0	0
9	003302	168	4	132	0	0	22	0	0	0
10	003201	161	16	75	0	1	48	8	0	0
11	018609	160	23	68	0	4	60	0	0	0
12	003105	156	9	30	0	0	112	0	0	0
13	011902	145	3	26	0	0	106	0	0	0
14	018603	143	12	104	5	0	13	1	0	0
15	018516	137	20	98	0	1	7	3	0	0
16	018511	135	21	76	7	7	12	0	1	0
17	010110	128	13	45	0	0	55	6	0	0
18	013907	128	33	40	0	0	39	1	0	0
19	003113	123	9	47	0	1	39	3	0	0
20	003209	122	17	22	0	0	61	0	0	0
21	008507	120	26	20	0	1	46	5	0	0
22	003103	118	4	35	0	0	71	0	1	0
23	003212	118	36	57	0	2	8	0	0	0
24	018504	118	9	45	0	0	52	0	0	0
25	014200	114	29	30	0	0	51	0	0	0
26	019302	113	22	51	0	0	25	1	0	0
27	018518	112	13	88	2	0	3	1	0	0
28	008358	111	28	14	0	0	41	0	0	0
29	008600	110	19	26	0	0	58	0	0	0
30	018507	110	39	30	1	0	26	2	0	0
31	003214	110	26	56	1	0	21	0	1	0
32	013414	109	44	0	0	1	51	0	1	0
33	003213	108	4	14	8	0	70	0	0	0
34	010003	107	9	15	12	0	61	0	0	0
35	003101	106	7	31	11	0	48	0	0	0
36	013413	105	31	5	0	0	62	0	0	0
37	003208	105	23	8	1	0	58	0	0	0
38	003111	104	36	33	2	3	6	4	0	0
39	019403	104	14	52	0	0	23	0	0	0
40	018509	102	21	64	0	0	5	4	0	0
41	011802	99	6	33	2	0	44	5	0	0
42	014102	98	21	25	5	0	37	0	0	0
43	010200	97	28	15	3	1	15	2	0	0
44	009400	97	51	19	1	0	13	3	0	0
45	009201	96	17	36	0	1	26	12	0	0
46	018513	95	33	34	0	0	18	0	0	0
47	003004	93	11	38	1	0	35	0	0	0
48	009303	92	28	25	0	0	32	0	0	0
49	003404	92	8	78	0	0	3	0	0	0
50	010402	91	27	12	0	2	30	3	6	0



COMMON SERVICE OCCUPATIONS FOR PACIFIC ISLANDERS:

- Healthcare support (nursing or home health aides, physical therapist as-sistants, etc.)
- Protective service (firefighters, law enforcement, etc.)
- Food preparation and serving related (cooks, waiters, etc.)
- Building and grounds cleaning and maint-enance
- Personal care and services (transportation, tourism attendants, child care workers, etc.)

Figure 3.



Source: Census 2000

According to the 2005-2007 American Community Survey, the per capita income for the general population improved to $26,178. The per capita income for the PI population was $19,588 for the same period, or 33.6% lower than the national average. In contrast, the per capita income for the non-Hispanic white population was $30,496, or 16.5% higher than the national average.

The disparity in income was even wider in California than the rest of the country. In Los Angeles County, per capita income was $11,106 for Samoans and $9,711 for Tongans, much lower than the $35,785 for non-Hispanic whites in the county. In Orange County, per capita income was $12,701 for Samoans and a paltry $5,883 for Tongans, compared to $35,739 for non-Hispanic whites in the county, which was *six* times as much as that for Tongans.

Unemployment among PI men and women are 10.4% and 10.9%, respectively, as compared to 5.7% for the general population.[9] In general, PIs are less likely to be employed in management, professional, and other related occupations. According to Census 2000, 9.2% of the general population (including 10.4% of non-Hispanic white population) in the U.S. worked in management occupations, such as top executives, financial managers, etc.; whereas only 6.5% of the PI population occupied these positions. Non-Hispanic whites were almost twice as likely as PIs to be in legal occupations, such as lawyers and judges (1.3% vs. 0.7%). In contrast, PIs were more likely to be employed in service occupations (See Figure 3).

BIOGRAPHY

JOSEPH GAFATAITUA FA'AVAE

(Samoan) with a B.A. in English literature from the University of Colorado, serves as the Program Coordinator for the Pacific Islander Health Careers Pipeline program. He also serves as an advocate for youth, and aspires to become an instructor and researcher on Pacific Islander youth issues.

BIOGRAPHY

JAY AROMIN

(Chamoru) serves as the Community Health Nurse for Guam Communications Network of Southern California. He is involved with many preventative health programs within the Pacific Islander and API communities throughout the State of California, nationally, and into the Pacific. He is also a part of the Kutturan Chamoru Foundation, which is one of two internationally recognized organizations specializing in the education of Chamoru arts & culture.

HEALTH CHARACTERISTICS OF PACIFIC ISLANDERS

The data available on the health status of PIs reflects an unhealthy population. They suffer disproportionately from illnesses and diseases, including diabetes, heart disease and cancer. All-site cancer mortality rates for Native Hawaiians are the second highest in the U.S., following African Americans; specifically, Native Hawaiian women have the highest mortality rate from breast cancer in this country.[10, 11] Marshallese women have higher breast and cervical cancer rates overall in the U.S.[12] Data drawn from American Samoans living in Hawai`i and Los Angeles County in California revealed that American Samoan males were 10 times more likely to have nasopharyngeal cancer, seven times more likely to have liver cancer, and three times more likely to have stomach cancer than their White counterparts.[13]

PIs also engage in high-risk health behaviors. In comparison to other ethnic groups, PIs have higher rates of smoking, alcohol consumption, and obesity.[14] Native Hawaiians and Samoans are among the most overweight and obese people in the world. According to a study by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Information Network, PI men and women in California had an average Body Mass Index (BMI) of 35 and 35, respectively.[15] (A BMI that is equal to or greater than 30 is considered "obese.")

In April 2007, in response to the dire health status of the PI population, the PI community in California convened a town hall meeting in Carson, California (Los Angeles County), with the Office of Minority Health (OMH).[16] The Town Hall was followed by a NHOPI Health Summit held in Washington D.C. in October 2007.[17] Members of the PI community across the country, community-based organizations working with PIs, governmental representatives, and other service providers shared with the OMH the challenges and possible solutions to some of the health issues that are plaguing the PI community.

One of the themes that emerged from both the Town Hall Meeting and the Health Summit was the issue of lack of adequate health care access for the PI communities. Specifically, accessing health care is problematic as immigration status for some PI individuals, particularly those from U.S. Territories, is not clear for many health care providers. Languages present another barrier, as translation and interpretation services in PI languages are unavailable. PIs also face other cultural barriers because

The late Auntie Judy Flores, co-founder of Cal Islanders Humanitarian Association (CIHA) of Orange County and strong supporter of the Pacific Islander Health Careers Pipeline.

mainstream health care does not include or incorporate their cultural norms. Without training programs and integrative health education curricula that "understand and apply indigenous peoples' paradigms of health, knowledge, science, and research,"[18] health care professionals are not prepared to understand the contextual cultural factors contributing to the health status of PIs and apply them in order to provide more effective care.[19]

In response to these challenges, participants in both the Town Hall Meeting and the Health Summit identified "workforce development" as one of their recommendations to be focused for future strategic planning for the PI community. It is believed that increasing the number of PIs in health careers will (1) create more culturally competent approaches to working with PI communities (including language-appropriate health care materials

COMMUNITY VOICES

"My mother, Terese San`Nicolas Tun`cap grew up in the villages of Yona and Assan, Guam... She was determined to give her sons a life and she fought hard to get me into college, she turned me around and saved my life... The support of my familia and the Grace of God turned me around from a life of trouble."

"It has never been difficult to be Chamoru or to be an Islander. Guahan bula megotao, we have tremendous strength. Ginen i` familian Chobik, taotao Aniguak yan i` familian Tonku, taotao Maloloh. I come from the Chobik and Tonku clans of the villages of Aniguak and Maloloh. Hu tungu i` guahu, I know who I am."

"Why do we have less than 200 PI students in the entire UC system (over 100,000 students)? Our people have a right to education, and yet we do not have access. We have been given unacceptable excuses for the lack of PI equity and inclusion into the state of California. We have been told, we are a "new" minority group, and that "it will take time" for us to achieve "the American dream." What is difficult, is realizing that educated people do not understand that we have been apart of this country since the 1890s."

"When I was a youth, there were no PI outreach programs in the middle schools or high schools. When I was a youth, there were no teachers or administrators that understood who I was and where Guam is... However, there is hope for our young people. The youth of today have strong leaders and an entire army of progressive intellectual soldiers that can and will fight for our communities."

"Munga maleffa I nana'mu biha. Don't forget your grand mother. Munga Maleffa I respectu para I nana'mu. Don't forget to respect your mother."

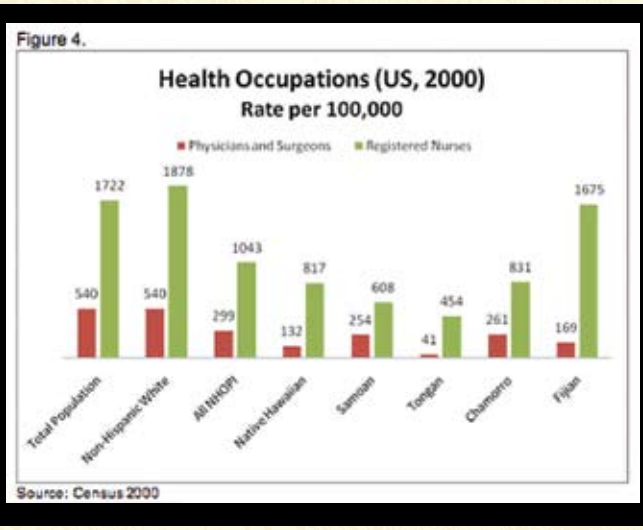
Migetu Michael Tun'cap, native Chamoru from the Chobik clan of Sumai, the Tonku clan of Inarajan, and the Boogit clan of Asan, Guahan (GUAM). He is a PhD candidate in Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley.

and culturally-appropriate research methodologies); and (2) create an infrastructure to support PI health initiatives. These strategies will then improve the health status of the PI communities in the U.S. This is the foundation on which OCAPICA developed its ***Pacific Islander Health Careers Pipeline Program (PIHCPP).***

There is still much work to be done in the PI community in order to achieve parity in health careers. In the U.S. in 2000, about 4.6% of the employed civilian population 16 years and over were employed in one of the healthcare practitioners and technical occupations, which include physicians and surgeons, registered nurses, therapists, and health technicians. This translated to 540 physicians and surgeons per 100,000 people among both the general population and non-Hispanic white population in the U.S. However, for the PI population, the rate was only 299 physicians and surgeons per 100,000 people. For the Tongan community, in particular, the rate dropped to 41 physicians and surgeons per 100,000 people. Similarly, in 2000, there were 1,722 registered nurses per 100,000 people in the general population. For the PI population, that rate was about 39.4% lower, or 1,043 registered nurses per 100,000 people.
(See Figure 4).

The rate was even lower in California, where there were 173 PI physicians and surgeons per 100,000 PIs, even though there were about 531 physicians and surgeons per 100,000 people in the State's general population in 2000, comparable to the national rate.

Figure 4.



EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PACIFIC ISLANDERS

For minority communities, education has been a central source of empowerment. The same sentiment holds true for PIs. Given the dire socio-economic conditions of PIs, education is viewed as a viable means to transform the status quo. Furthermore, the community has also made a link between its health status and its ability to increase the number of PIs in health careers, which hinges on a minimal threshold of education attainment. It is for this reason that the *PIHCPP* aims to impact the academic achievement of young PI men and women and encourage them to attain the necessary credentials in order to contribute to the improvement of community health.

In secondary education in California, there is a gap in academic achievement between PIs and the general population. In particular, the one-year dropout rate for PIs (5.7%) in 2006-2007 is higher than that for the general population (4.2%) or their white counterparts in California (2.8%). The widest disparity among Southern California counties is found in San Diego, where the dropout rate for PI high school students is 5.9% in 2006-2007, and only 3.8% for the general population and 2.1% for their white counterparts (See Table 1).

Table 1. High School Dropout Rates (One-Year Rate) by Ethnic Designation

	All Students	White	Pacific Islander
California	4.2	2.8	**5.7**
Los Angeles	4.5	2.4	**5.7**
Orange	1.4	0.8	**2.2**
San Diego	3.8	2.1	**5.9**

Source: California Department of Education, 2006-2007

BIOGRAPHY

FUIFUILUPE NIUMEITOLU (Tongan) is the founder and co-host of the radio program "Education is Powerful" broadcasted on Radio Tonga in San Francisco. She is currently a PhD student at the University of California at Berkeley. Her current research examines socio economic issues and Tongan peoples' labor here in the United States.

Among population that are 25 years and over, in the U.S., 80.4% in the general population had a high school diploma or equivalent in 2000, compared to 85.5% for non-Hispanic whites and 78.3% for PIs. In California, 76.8% of the general population 25 years and over had a high school diploma or equivalent. PIs were also slightly lower than the national average, at 76.0%, while non-Hispanic whites were higher than the national average, at 89.8%. It seems that the percentage of high school graduates in the PI population was comparable to the general population in 2000. However, according to Census 2000, there were proportionately less PI adults who have at least a bachelor's degree than the general population.

In the U.S., almost 1 in 4 (24.4%) people who are 25 years and over had at least a bachelor's degree in 2000. In contrast, only 13.8% in the PI population had reached this educational attainment. That figure was slightly lower in California (12.6%), including both Los Angeles (12.7%) and San Diego (12.7%) counties (See Figure 5). PI students may be graduating from high school at a similar rate to the general population, but they were not enrolled in college. Or if they were, they were not as likely to matriculate.

COMMUNITY VOICES

"My journey to graduate school began with a challenge from a college professor... this chance meeting turned out to be the beginning of a new chapter in my academic career and a turning point in my life.
I was a former college athlete, who was well into my junior year without a declared major. I figured I'd just get some sort of college degree, just about any degree, so that I could teach high school and coach high school football. I never saw myself as an academic or scholar... That day I was challenged on several levels. I had to shed years of expectations reaffirmed by parents and teachers that I had nothing to offer intellectually. I also had to raise the bar for myself for professional aspirations. I believe life is one part chance and one part self-determination. That one chance day in Doc's office, an opportunity revealed itself. And I think I made a good decision at that fork in the road. I'm now finishing my PhD at UCLA, and make every attempt I can to challenge PI students to shed the limited expectations that others may have placed for them."

Kapalekanaka (Alek) Apaelu'u Sripipatana (Hawaiian/Tahitian), former college athlete and W.K. Kellogg fellow in health policy research; currently a PhD candidate in public health at UCLA.

"Potopoto 'a niu mui"

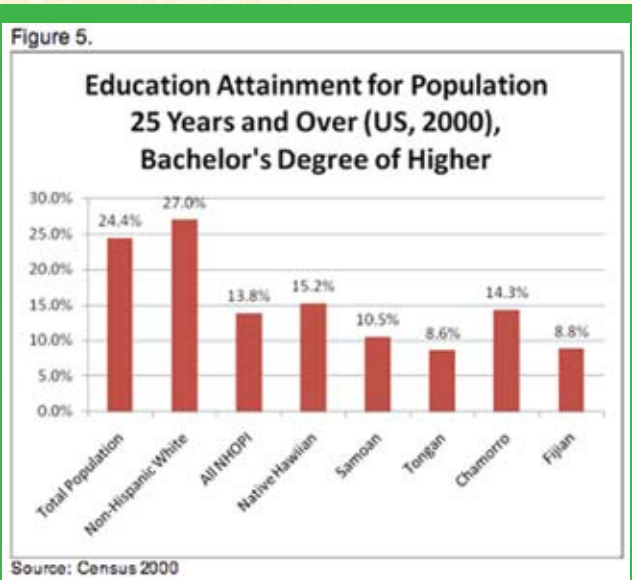
The wisdom of a young coconut

[A Tongan proverb]

When a young coconut tree first bears fruits, it bears many at one time and at other times, there won't be fruit. It's not until it is an older tree that it bears fruit consistently. This speaks to a young person's burst of sudden knowledge that usually comes with education and knowing the appropriate times and places to impart that knowledge.

Meaning: Though at a young age there is a lot of learned wisdom, there is always more to learn in the process of growth.

Figure 5.



Generally, the Tongan and Fijian communities fared worse in education attainment than other PI communities. In California, only 60.7% of Tongans and 65.1% of Fijians had at least a high school diploma in 2000. Only 7.1% of Tongans and 7.7% of Fijians had at least a bachelor's degree. Also, about 9.8% of Samoans had at least a bachelor's degree in the same time periods. That is less than 1 person in 10, as compared to over a quarter of the general population (26.6%).

PIs also fare worse in college enrollment. Only 29% of PIs between the ages of 18 and 24 are enrolled in a college or university, which is comparable to African Americans. In contrast, 39% of non-Hispanic whites and 57% of Asians in that age range are enrolled in college.[20] Consequently, only 4.1% of all PIs in the U.S. hold a graduate or professional degree, as compared to 18.5% of the general population and 17.5% of Asian Americans.[21]

For decades, educators and minority communities have studied and attempted to address the educational achievement gap. Kao and Thompson[22] state that although there have been some minimal gains in "educational aspirations" over the years for minority communities, there still remains a significant gap between PIs, Native Americans, African Americans and their White and Asian American counterparts. They identify the following themes associated with this gap: achievement/motivation, parent socialization, parent/family-child expectations toward academic achievement, parent/family-school participation/involvement, literacy and language differences, degree of historical consciousness (attitudes towards colonization), and political and economic dimensions.[23]

Ah Sam and Robinson[24] also identify similar challenges in educational attainment facing PIs specifically. They identify the following "structural" barriers, including:

BARRIERS

- The lack of Pacific Island-focused programs that provide and coordinate social, academic, or financial advice, aid, and support to Pacific Islander students
- Inadequate academic advising and counseling due to cultural barriers and/or lack of knowledge
- The lack of specific orientation program to address their unique concerns and issues and to prepare them for what to expect in college
- The paucity of Pacific Islanders in leadership or professional staff positions who could serve as mentors to new or continuing students
- Inadequate college preparation and little encouragement to pursue higher education while in primary and secondary school
- Prioritization of cultural, kinship, and family obligations before higher education
- The lack of communication, information dissemination, and outreach relating to educational opportunities and programs
- Financial constraints

Tsutsumoto[25] finds similar barriers in his research of Samoan students in California's higher education system. In addition, Tsutsumoto identifies a psychologically-based issue ("internal hatred") as an additional barrier to higher education. Specifically, PI students in this study experienced difficulties with negotiating their personal cultural identity and reconciling it with education.

As an initial phase to develop the PIHCPP, OCAPICA conducted a needs assessment to provide more in-depth, qualitative data to respond to these challenges identified in existing research. The PIHCPP is designed to reduce structural and psychological barriers confronting PI young men and women in education attainment as a key strategic step to eliminate health disparities in the PI communities.

BIOGRAPHY

DR. ERIN KAHUNAWAIKA'ALA WRIGHT (Native Hawaiian) was raised in Kalihi O`ahu. She earned her undergraduate degree in Hawaiian Studies from the University of Hawai`i at Manoa and her Masters and Doctorate degrees in Higher Education and Education from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). Dr. Wright's research interests include indigenous education, education of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, indigenous identity, and research methodology. Her professional experiences are largely based in education administration and Native Hawaiian student services. As an active member of her community, Dr. Wright finds community-based research projects the most challenging and most rewarding.

Students from Pacific Islander College Bound Program spend a day in the life of a community organizer at OCAPICA.

III. Strengths and Challenges to Accessing Education

THE METHOD

THE PIHCPP NEEDS ASSESSMENT ILLUSTRATES THE ACTUAL NEEDS AND CONCERNS THAT PI YOUTH CURRENTLY HAVE. PIHCPP STAFF COLLECTED A CONVENIENCE SAMPLE OF KEY INFORMANTS FROM PI COMMUNITIES IN LOS ANGELES, ORANGE AND SAN DIEGO COUNTIES AND CONDUCTED BOTH INDIVIDUAL qualitative interviews as well as focus groups with key adult and PI youth. Interview guides as well as consent and assent forms were created and IRB [Institutional Review Board] approved. The PIHCPP was able to provide incentives for all the focus group participants to honor the time they spent sharing their personal experiences. Focus group facilitation training was also conducted in preparation for focus group sessions.

The PIHCPP staff, along with the PIHCPP Advisory Committee, created a list of key stakeholders that would qualify as participants in this needs assessment. This list included representation from various PI communities within Southern and parts of Northern California [Marshallese, Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Tongan, Maori, Fijian, Chamorro, and Tahitian]. The final list of key informants included a diverse representation of all PI communities. The key informants were identified as educators, heath practitioners, community leaders, mentors, entrepreneurs, cultural leaders, educators, students, alumnus, parents, and faith based leaders that worked closely with PI youth. These individuals discussed the issues and barriers that PI youth face daily, and also provided recommendations to addressing these challenges.

Interviews were scheduled based on the availability of each key informant. To accommodate participants' schedules, the interviewer traveled to a site convenient for each participant to conduct the interview. Twenty-six interviews were conducted, which included 11 young adult key informant interviews and 15 adult key informant interviews. With regard to focus groups, key community leaders within the Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties were identified to help organize a diverse group of PI youth to participate in each focus group. PI youth were recruited to participate through various outreach efforts. Key community leaders were vital in recruitment assistance and garnering parental support and consent.

The PIHCPP Advisory Committee was able to connect with other PI community service providers (community based organizations, academic institutions, clubs) to help organize youth focus groups from each of their regional communities. Since the communities are not concentrated in one county, the scope broadened to include Los Angeles County which holds the largest population of PIs in California. Focus groups were organized by the five largest PI ethnic groups across the three counties, Chamorro, Marshallese, Native Hawaiian, Samoan and Tongan. We were able to conduct five focus groups with a total of 38 youth that spanned across Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties. While recruitment was successful, it was a convenient sample and is not representative of all PIs in Southern California.





ADULT INTERVIEWS

Fifteen interviews were conducted with adults that are involved in and working with PI communities through educational support services; these services provide support to students who are in or pursuing, a higher education. Informants represented the diversity of the PI communities (which include Chamorro, Native Hawaiian, Fijian, Tongan, Samoan, Maori, Marshallese, and mixed PI descent). Interview participants included Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) counselors, high school and college counselors and teachers, members of PI clubs/student associations, community based organization staff, professors, and members of civic clubs. Interviews were completed over the course of two months and ranged from 20 to 80 minutes in length. Informants were given questions from a focus group guide that asked interviewees to discuss their own experiences in the educational system, family/culture, community/neighborhood, friendship groups, family educational attainment, perceived barriers to achievement, perceived problems/challenges for PI youth and recommendations for changes to improve educational access for PI youth.

The interviews revealed common issues that were consistent throughout the different groups. Such issues included the impact of socio-economic status, the effects of the school and home environment, the lack of role models, influence of culture (beliefs, values and norms), the burden of competing priorities (financial needs are urgent and present), and the significance of stereotyping. These were identified as key factors that impact and influence the success, or failure, of PI youth in the educational system. However, all informants felt that the current conditions for PI youth in education were improving, and in order to succeed, continued collective efforts were needed to bring greater awareness to educational opportunities and resources. Informants also believed that parental and community support was needed for youth to succeed. In particular, informants believed that having PI role models in the community and in the educational system was pivotal to ensuring the future success of PI youth in education. The following represents information shared from needs assessment participants regarding the influences and factors that impact education, educational access, and well-being among Pacific Islander youth.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

When speaking of socio-economic status, many informants discussed the communities and environments in which PI communities lived in. Many testified to how, as immigrants, many found themselves in low-income and diverse neighborhoods and as a result of the socio-economic status of the community impacted and influenced many of their choices. For instance, different options were available within communities with different socio-economic status, such as tutoring and mentorship programs; this left some communities with less options and less opportunities. In some cases, the socio-economic environment created racial hostility and a need to survive, thus creating less focus on the importance of education. As a result, youth focused on different environmental factors and had different influencing factors.

> **"...the majority of our people live in lower socioeconomic conditions. That means they're all heavily minority populations... Others that suffer from the same social ills like poverty. So it's very difficult. And then we become part of this culture where we just don't feel that we can be successful or we cannot get out from the bonds of poverty."**

In other cases, as a result of the socio-economic status, many PI families worked diligently at multiple jobs to ensure livelihood and the same time, sent support home to family in the islands to ensure their livelihood.

"COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE... WORKING TWO OR MORE JOBS, TWO OR EVEN THREE JOBS. AND THIS MONEY THEY USE TO SUPPORT THEIR FAMILIES NOT JUST HERE IN THE UNITED STATES BUT THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE WORLD. ...SO THE MONEY IS SHARED WITH NOT ONLY ONE FAMILY HERE IN THE US BUT EXTENDED FAMILY HERE IN THE US AND IT'S ALSO SENT TO FAMILY THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE WORLD, AND BACK HOME AS WELL"

"...economics plays a big role and the environment that they currently live in, its about urgency... It's urgent to pay the phone bill immediately, that sometimes higher education, or education because it might take a longer period of time... that's put as a back burner."

In turn, many PI youth, once graduated from high school or perhaps even before graduation, were expected to begin working and supporting their families. This made it difficult, almost impossible, to pursue higher education. With competing priorities, issues such as education are not always prioritized. The success that education presented were not seen immediately enough, and this steered students to putting it off, in favor of a job, indefinitely.

SOCIAL SUPPORT

Informants agreed that the lack of support and involvement from parents played a key role in youth educational attainment. Key informants stated that youth needed familial and community support to pursue educational opportunities. Sometimes the pressures of other priorities, such as the financial obligations noted above, detracted from support to pursue education. Equally as important, was the discussion about the lack of PI role models at multiple levels, aside from athletes, and the need to create mentorship and role modeling, so that students can see others like themselves, succeeding and achieving. It was particularly important to the youth to see other PIs succeed. Seeing success modeled through PIs would reinforce the idea that there are opportunities for success available for youth seeking a higher education, especially among individuals more like themselves. Informants also spoke about the need to expose PI youth to opportunities that broadened their horizons beyond their circumstances; for example, showing youth what being on a college campus is like through a college campus tour would duly open their eyes to the opportunities available to them through a higher education. Exposing PI youth to alternatives outside their environments through mentorship broadens their range for opportunities and potential choices.

"...because we don't have many professional people in our community and when we find one, we tell 'em to do this is what I need you to do. I need you to come and speak for a little bit to some of the students so that they can see that besides being The Rock or Junior Seau or some high profile entertainer like the Jets that they can become teachers or doctors or lawyers or other honorable professions and ambitions"

"UM THE OTHER THING THAT'S IMPORTANT TO DO IS TO REMEMBER, WHEN WE'RE LIVING IN POVERTY AND WE LEAVE WE MUST COME BACK AND WE MUST COME BACK TO THE VILLAGE. AND I'VE SEEN SO MANY OF OUR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS THAT FORGET. NOT ONLY IN OUR COMMUNITY BUT IN OTHER ETHNIC COMMUNITIES. SO WE HAVE TO GIVE BACK. WE HAVE TO COME BACK TO OUR ROOTS"

"...(we've) worked with a lot of students that we would work with that we use to bring them to campus sometimes for functions such as a day in life of a college student. You know just to show them on campus, just to show them how college students go through life and what it takes, we would show them what it takes to umm, be at the collegiate level."

"It was only because of mentorship that I eventually chose what I wanted to do."

CULTURE

Culture was addressed multiple times by key informant interviews as both a strength, as well as a challenge, depending on specific situations. Informants discussed how families, upon moving to the United States (US), lose their support systems from the home islands, and this played one of many roles in changing a supportive environment for their family and, consequently, their education.

"...we no longer have that common support system. The support systems we once had, back in the islands. Where the grandmother is home taking care of the kids while the parent is working or you have aunts and uncles who might be looking out for the kids. Here in the US that support system is extremely different. What we are seeing is that even grandparents are working now. You know in the economy here in the US, grandparents are working, both parents are working."

Traditionally, Pacific Island cultures foster a community by sharing, nurturing and modeling. Daily activities such as lei making can cultivate interest in carrying on skills passed from generation to generation.

The idea of a close knit community and support network, which is traditionally a strength in PI cultures, is lost in the US along with the encouragement and motivation to make education a priority. Some informants shared that in the Islands, education was tasked with the educators, so to have parents take on the role of supporters, was a new experience. This was an experience that required learning and supporting. Informants also spoke about how it was challenging for youth to embrace their own cultures and communities. Often youth found themselves going to school with other youth that had different experiences and resources and what appeared to be common experiences were not common. As a result, sometimes youth would resist sharing the strengths and assets of their communities in order to be more like their peers. This would inform self-esteem and self belief and influenced youth belief in their abilities to be like others and/or to succeed in the educational system.

"...we are seeing PIs who are coming into college who, who have absolutely nothing common with other kids that they are going to class with. Cultural capital tends to give a person a particular kind of self esteem, right? You feel like you are in a comfortable place, you speak the same language; you are familiar with the culture norms there. We have PI kids that are going to school...everything that they are taught is normal at home is completely foreign..."

BIOGRAPHY

JONATHAN "TANA" LEPULE

graduated in 1997 from San Diego State University with a B.A. in Liberal Studies and an emphasis on Mathematics. Upon graduation, he was substituting as an elementary school teacher in San Diego. In 1998, he was hired at the Union of Pan Asian Communities as a health educator and is currently the Health Division supervisor. Tana continues to advocate at the local, state and federal level for the Asian and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities.

Tana has also served on various boards such as the San Diego Mayor's and Police Chief's API advisory board. He is also involved with community organizations like the Samoan Community Council and is currently the Ex-Officio board member for the Pacific Islander Festival Association. As a co-founder of the Pacific Islander Student Association (PISA) at San Diego State University, Tana continues to assist PISA with the promotion of higher education to Pacific Islander high school students.

BIOGRAPHY

MICHELLE WONG

is the Health Programs Manager at the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA) in Garden Grove. Prior to joining OCAPICA, Michelle was a research associate at Cal State Fullerton, working with Dr. Sora Park Tanjasiri on various cancer prevention projects including a pilot study exploring the various social support needs among Samoan women and a 3 year study to map pro and anti tobacco influences among Pacific Islander communities. Michelle received her Masters in Public Health in Health Promotion from the Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California (USC). She focused her research primarily on international health and subsequently founded the Asia Pacific Early Career Network on Public Health. Michelle's interests and experience include community based participatory research, community empowerment and organization, capacity building, international health, and women's health issues.

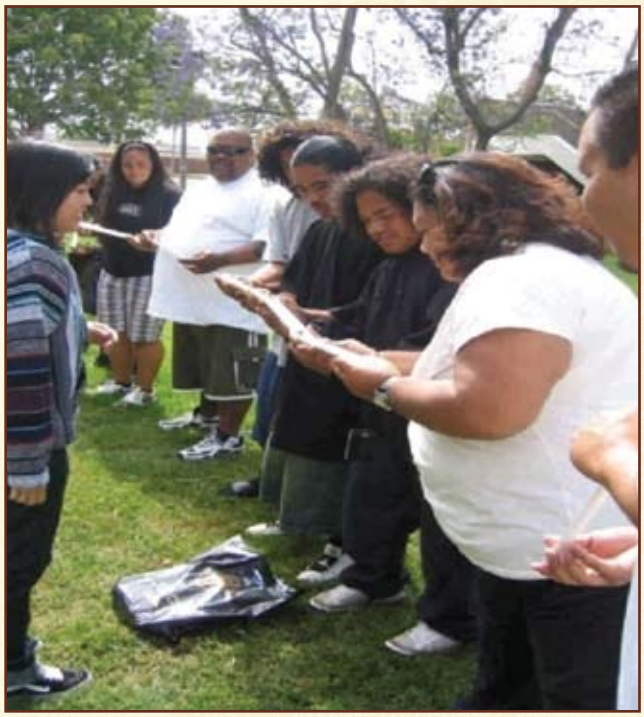
Different cultural beliefs and values also influenced how youth performed in school and created a chasm in regards to what was the most appropriate behavior for them.

"...(America) it's an individualistic society. We're used to doing things for one another so this becomes a hindrance for some because, again the way, we're raised to be humble and we're raised not to bring attention to ourselves, we're raised to uh so now you're saying well you need to go out and do this for yourself and you're not going to help other people. So that's very foreign to our people."

"The whole that we are white versus the whole being PI. What does that mean and I think that's the biggest problem, we don't know how to be one or the other and especially with our parents they assume like one is better than the other and I need to speak English to you so you don't fail in school. I need to do this because you're going to be better off."

Informants also expressed how being a student was not necessarily culturally appropriate – if there were no other generations who had attended college, the college experience was not a cultural norm.

"It is a luxury to be just a student. That's what I was thinking about when I was in college...you know, I wasn't just a student because I had two or three jobs, you know. It's a luxury just to be student, just to have to study and have everything paid for; I mean that's a luxury. To sit and ponder and think and debate and discuss is a luxury. Other people have to go to work every day."



Students participated in leadership development activities at the Pacific Islander Student Leadership Conference held in May 2008 at Cal State Long Beach.

"Umm, because sometimes the kids went off to college and would look like they would be leaving their families behind, and they weren't staying behind now to help out the families, you know when they needed it the most. Umm, ah, I mean I've seen examples where parents would you know would be completely behind their kids and what not, other times I would see parents were told kids get out of high school even before that to get them into the work field, you know the work place so they could get the, start bringing home money to help out the family. Umm, (pause) ahh, you know I mean so, I've seen both sides so I mean it's hard to really put a pinpoint ya know on it because its um, (pause), because especially its ah, coming from a PI family where everyone believes its where we help out one another. You know education sometimes it seems more as an individual type thing ya know? So it, it does tend to clash sometimes with ah cultural values honestly umm, and then, and also from what I remember seeing, I remember seeing a lot of ahh, a lot of the times the only generation, or like the parents or the grandparents would see education as a way of taking culture away from the kids sometimes."

As one informant expressed, "school rivals household." There is an underlying tension between keeping one's cultural values taught in the home- collectivity, communalism, reciprocity, sharing- and pursuing an education- an environment that is highly competitive and individualistic. For many PI families, it seems near impossible for both to coexist. This poses a challenge to the pursuit of higher education.

"So like in California, you know, say sharing is important in your family right....are those things taught in your educational classes? It's all about competitiveness and individualism as far as I know in the school system. I mean there's a lot of these values that are not translated into outside environments outside their houses. For the youth especially because the adults I know they can navigate that but for the youth that's the challenge. They need mentors...."

BIOGRAPHY

ART MEDINA

has done Pacific Islander community work since 1998. As a student at California State University, Long Beach, he was the vice president and president of the Pacific Islanders' Association (PIA). He volunteered as a facilitator for the "Gathering of Pacific Islander Youth" and has been an instrumental part of the annual luaus at CSULB that promote cultural awareness to the campus community. Art is extremely proud of the implementation of the high school outreaches/dance competitions designed to provide access to higher education and leadership skills to over 150 Pacific Islander youth. He was born in Guam and has been a long time resident of Long Beach. He received his B.A. in Anthropology at CSULB in 2001. Art works for the Educational Opportunity Program on campus as an Access and Retention Advisor. He assists high school and community college transfer students who come from historically low income families or are first generation college students with the CSU system, EOP and Financial Aid application process.

BIOGRAPHY

JACQUELINE TRAN

is currently the Program Manager of the NCI-funded WINCART (Weaving an Islander Network for Cancer Awareness, Research and Training) project at Cal State Fullerton. WINCART is a multi-year project focusing on reducing disparities in cancer among Pacific Islander communities, with a focus on southern California (Los Angeles, Orange, Imperial, Riverside and San Diego counties). The project focuses on community-based participatory action research as a mechanism to address cancer disparities. Jackie is also Health Research Manager at the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA), a non-profit community based organization serving the Asian and Pacific Islander communities regarding health, policy, youth, capacity development and education needs. Jackie works on various community-based participatory research programs focused on cancer and health promotion and health education projects focusing on chronic diseases and cancer. Jackie's work has focused on community advocacy for quality, linguistic, and culturally appropriate health care, especially among underrepresented Asian and Pacific Islander subgroups. Previously, Jackie worked as Clinic Manager at a non-profit community based health center in Santa Ana. Jackie received her undergraduate degree in Biology and Asian American Studies and Master's in Public Health (in the department of Health Services) at the University of California at Los Angeles and is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in Public Health in Health Services. Jackie has served on various committees and tasks forces and is currently a Board Member of Susan G. Komen for the Cure Los Angeles County Affiliate, chair of Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Orange County Affiliate's Breast Health Symposium and Advisory Member of the Maternal Outreach Management Systems (MOMS) VIETMoms prenatal outreach and education project.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

As mentioned before, socio-economic status was heavily discussed as an influence on education for PI, particularly finances. The competing financial priorities of families posed challenges to allowing parents to be guiding figures in their children's lives and ensuring opportunities to be involved. In other cases, education was not seen as a top priority as youth were asked to take on jobs to help financially support their families. Education was also viewed as a journey that did not yield immediate results and therefore was not prioritized.

"...latch key kids whose parents are all working so they need to make money to pay rent and they're just home by themselves [the youth]. So there's nobody there who is actually taking care of them, or like knowing exactly what they are doing, what bad stuff they are doing or what... Just to help be role models to them..."

"So there isn't a parent, there isn't a parental figure at home. And um, you know there are just these differences, there is such a big difference between the parent's lives and the kinds of lives they live and the kind of values from their kids."

"...a lot of them just see that the workforce is a goal, just making money...not even saving for myself, more for my family, income for my family, that's the goal, that's what I need to strive for. Or that's what I need to do just to make my parents happy."

"So you know itís definitely financial. Itís definitely, you know, I mean a lot of things going on in our community is that we want, we want a quick fix because we trying to survive. So for us and our families itís hard to look at a big picture when weíre just trying to survive till tomorrow. Weíre trying to put food on the table, weíre trying to make ends meet so to try to convince, you know whoever it may be that it would be an investment for the future is really, really hard because itís like youíre taking away one of the earners in the family or in that household when everyone, or everybody is making ends meet and everyone is somehow contributing so that their family can survive."

STEREOTYPES

Stereotypes also influence the success of PI students. Informants shared thoughts on stereotypes among the youth, as well as educators. In particular, they discussed how there was a lack of expectation for success. As a result, students "play into" these expectations and do just enough to sustain themselves without striving for excellence or in some cases, give up altogether. Informants discussed how educators "played into" stereotypes about PIs not being successful and therefore were complacent with the students and failed to support them in aspiring and achieving higher goals.

"I'm just a person from a small village, back in the island, how am I going to compete?"

"...there's not importance and they see that oh I'll just pass anyways so I am not going to put in any effort, why do I need to put in effort if I know I am going to pass, if I know I am going to get to high school, why do I need to put effort into that? ...I'm just going to keep doing the same um same work ethic that I did... And maybe I'll pass."

"...the public institution also instills in them that they're not gonna amount to anything and they start, subconsciously they start believing that too, like college is not for me, I can't do that, I can't pass this class, I can't do it because I'm stupid, I'm stupid well, my teacher said I'm stupid... So they start believing that. And I think that plays a role to like their education is in place to just tell them how stupid they are. And they don't feel that, and there's no way to fight back, they just accept it."

"Too many of our students were pigeonholed in remedial classes um based in part due to stereotyping brought about not only by community issues but by education issues in general."

To add to the stereotypes, there are ongoing misconceptions about PI students and sports. Unless a student is a promising athlete, the belief is that the chance of that student getting into college and succeeding are very small. The result is a cascade

effect- if a student is not a talented athlete, there is little chance for him/her to get into college, and thus, the student develops a fatalistic attitude toward education and gives up. Often times, students who are athletes, spend so much of their time thinking about excelling in sports that they forget to think beyond the athletic scholarship and about their future as a career professional.

"I DIDN'T REALLY HAVE A MAIN SUPPORT PERSON, BUT THE ONE THING THAT I RELIED ON THE MOST MY FOUR YEARS IN HIGH SCHOOL WAS SPORTS AND IT WAS FOOTBALL BECAUSE A LOT OF US RELY ON FOOTBALL, SOME OF US RELIED ON BASEBALL AND BASKETBALL AND A LOT OF US GO ON TO COLLEGE WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE AND WE'RE JUST PLAYING BALL, BUT WE DON'T EVER HAVE A BACKUP PLAN SOMETIMES."

The informants shared other common themes that influenced and impacted youth's pursuit of education. They discussed community issues that influenced opportunities for awareness and support for academic success. Informants spoke repeatedly about the need for communities to come together and work together across religious and community differences, to ensure that youth were successful. Informants stressed the importance of a dialogue between the youth, parents and educators about the various challenges to education and how to address them. Consistently, informants expressed the great need to get the appropriate resources to the PI community to inform students and parents about the opportunities available. Ultimately, they all shared that there was a need to have a common goal and to work in a united fashion to ensure that our youth had the greatest opportunities for academic achievement. What was most important from all informants was the hopefulness for change and the belief that in working together, our PI youth would have many opportunities for academic and community success.

YOUTH INTERVIEWS

11 youth key informant interviews were conducted ranging from 14 to 35 minutes. Informants represented PI students attending college in the Southern California area. Informants were either current students or recent graduates that were involved in PI clubs/associations and if graduated, remained involved with the PI community at some capacity. The following represents the thoughts and feelings of the youth needs assessment participants. Of these interviews, commonalities were consistently raised. Informants discussed the impact of socio-economic status, the lack of role models; especially PI descent, impacts of culture (beliefs, values and norms), a lack of awareness of resources to support and assistance, and a lack of motivation or drive. As current or recent college students, the informants shared their experiences in the educational system. The informants received a great deal of support from family and were able to find resources within their colleges to help them succeed in college. They felt it important to provide role models, especially PI role models, information to resources and support for students, and the involvement of parents, to ensure success.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

When speaking of socio-economic status, informants shared some of the community/environmental issues that impacted their lives. Some shared the challenges of living in communities where they faced racial hostility, the presence of gangs, as well as socio-economic challenges. Informants expressed that their school environment reflected the unsafe, gang ridden surrounding environment. They shared, how these environmental factors influenced education and often times placed a lower emphasis on it.

"So we live in an environment where there is a lot of racial hostility too... we come from neighborhoods with the mentality that you look out for yourself and your family first and you know no one else reallly matters..."

"...for people where I grew up with, is it its struggle um not like you're dead broke, you're like a hair away from going on to the streets. It's still living paycheck to paycheck you know um worrying about um not worrying about how they gonna eat, working like um just daily living."

Similar to the information shared by adult key informants, the competing priorities within communities offset the priority of education.

They expressed that a PI household often included the extended family, which resulted in overcrowded living environments.

SOCIAL SUPPORT

Clearly, informants expressed that they were not receiving the support that they needed to pursue higher education. Informants spoke of the importance of seeing others like themselves serve as role models. As students involved in their respective PI student clubs, they were able to seek out support from others like themselves. They found a social support system among those like them. Students also spoke about the need for PI role models.

> ...working with PIs is great because there they have the same morals that you do and family morals and of course they put god first so there's nothing that could go wrong with that.

> "So having role models, I guess PI role models would really help. I think for our youth today because they need someone up to that they can relate to."

Informants shared that it was important to be able to have this social support network and how such networks increase awareness of other available resources, including their own campus career centers. Informants also believed that programs initiated through student groups in outreaching to the community were important. This helped to let other students know what was available and that there were students to contact and learn more from. An informant shared how they and their peers were told to focus on sports but that academic merit wasn t discussed and their peers missed potential opportunities. So they discussed how this misinformation and negative modeling can lead to missed opportunities.

> "UM A LOT OKAY A LOT OF THEM STRESS MORE ON SPORTS. AND WITHOUT THE GRADES THEY CAN T GO YOU KNOW AND PURSUE SPORTS AT THE COLLEGIATE LEVEL. SO THEY REALLY MISS THAT WHOLE YOU KNOW IT S A MISCONCEPTION AND I THINK A LOT OF PARENTS DON T UNDERSTAND THAT UNTIL IT S TOO LATE."

Without mentors and guidance, to encourage pursuing a higher education some students resort to working because they believe they have no other choice.

"Very few, very few of them will see themselves going to college. I've had, just many conversations with the kids being involved with PI Club and um, you know it's sad, a lot of them think that if they don't go to a real college that, you know, they just might as well start working. It's not, you know if they can't get a scholarship, or if they can't get the grants that they need, and um, some of them don't even know about grants, I don't think...if it wasn't for the advisors and the counselors, they wouldn't know about grants and that there's other ways to pay for college, they just don't know about it so they give up so, they give up so easily. And um, they're so tempted to be drug dealers after high school, or you know, doing something, some criminal activity rather than taking the energy to figure out how to pay for college...that doesn't have anything to do with sports."

"BUT SOMETHING I WISH THAT WOULD HAVE HELPED ME WOULD HAVE BEEN A HIGH SCHOOL OUTREACH LIKE THE ONE THAT WE JUST BROUGHT UP. JUST TO. JUST TO BE ABLE TO SOCIALIZE WITH OTHER PI'S IN OTHER. FELLOW PI'S IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION AND ALSO A MENTOR. WOULD HAVE BEEN NICE. FOR ME. SOMEONE WHO I COULD HAVE IDENTIFIED WITHIN SCHOOL AND. I THINK THAT'S ABOUT IT OR JUST SOMEONE I COULD TALK TO ABOUT SCHOOL IN GENERAL."

"Yeah, yeah, so like, yeah, if we had something like, you know, within the school, I guess or something like, someone that could go out there and talk to the kids, who understand the situations, you know past high school. Like you know high school is just not end of your road or anything, your education, like tell them there is more education out there for you. You can attain it...yeah."

In addition to role modeling and mentorship, especially from other PIs, informants believed that high school outreach activities would be highly beneficial for students seeking higher education. These activities would provide students an avenue through which to meet other PI students, become part of a larger social support network, and encourage one another to persist in pursuing higher education.

"My recommendations would be just to implement, um, those high school outreaches that we've had and also um, being, having a mentor, a mentor for probably the majority of PI's to see, to allow them to see what they need to do, and gain resources from that person. Also having workshops about um, self, self, I don't know, some workshop that will um, focus on them themselves, yeah, like self exploration like for them to deal with themselves instead of trying to put family first but they should try to put themselves first and see and go from there."

"An billiñliñ koba, koman lometo"

A few drops can make a vast ocean

[A Marshallese Proverb]

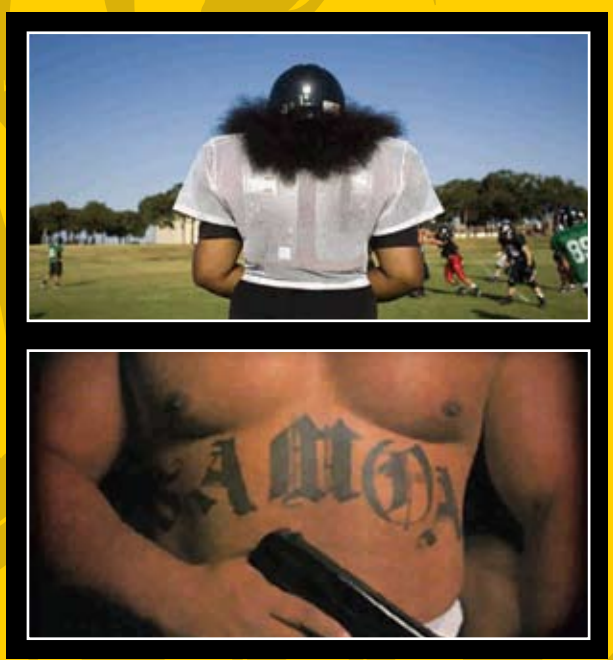
CULTURE

Youth informants discussed culture as both a strength and barrier in supporting their efforts. Informants mentioned that one of the positive aspects of their experience in the educational system was having the opportunity to be involved with the PI community and in turn, take pride in their culture while connecting with other PI youth. Informants shared about the need to prioritize family obligations providing support and tending to household needs, iterated in the adult informant interviews. However, youth informants also shared how culture posed a potential barrier.

"IT'S A BEAUTIFUL THING THAT YOU STICK WITH YOUR FAMILY, BUT THAT'S THE THING YOU HAVE TO STICK WITH YOUR FAMILY... YOU CAN'T GO OFF... 'I WANT TO GO STUDY ABROAD'"

"Basically it's kind of hard for them for PIs to try to be like get their own independence because they're so used to being so sheltered from their parents"

Youth specifically shared how education was an opportunity to develop and discover oneself; including one's identity, but that sometimes family did not see the merit in this. It was perceived as a selfish goal and that it did not contribute to the greater good of the family unit.



Some common PI stereotypes: Football Player and Gangster

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

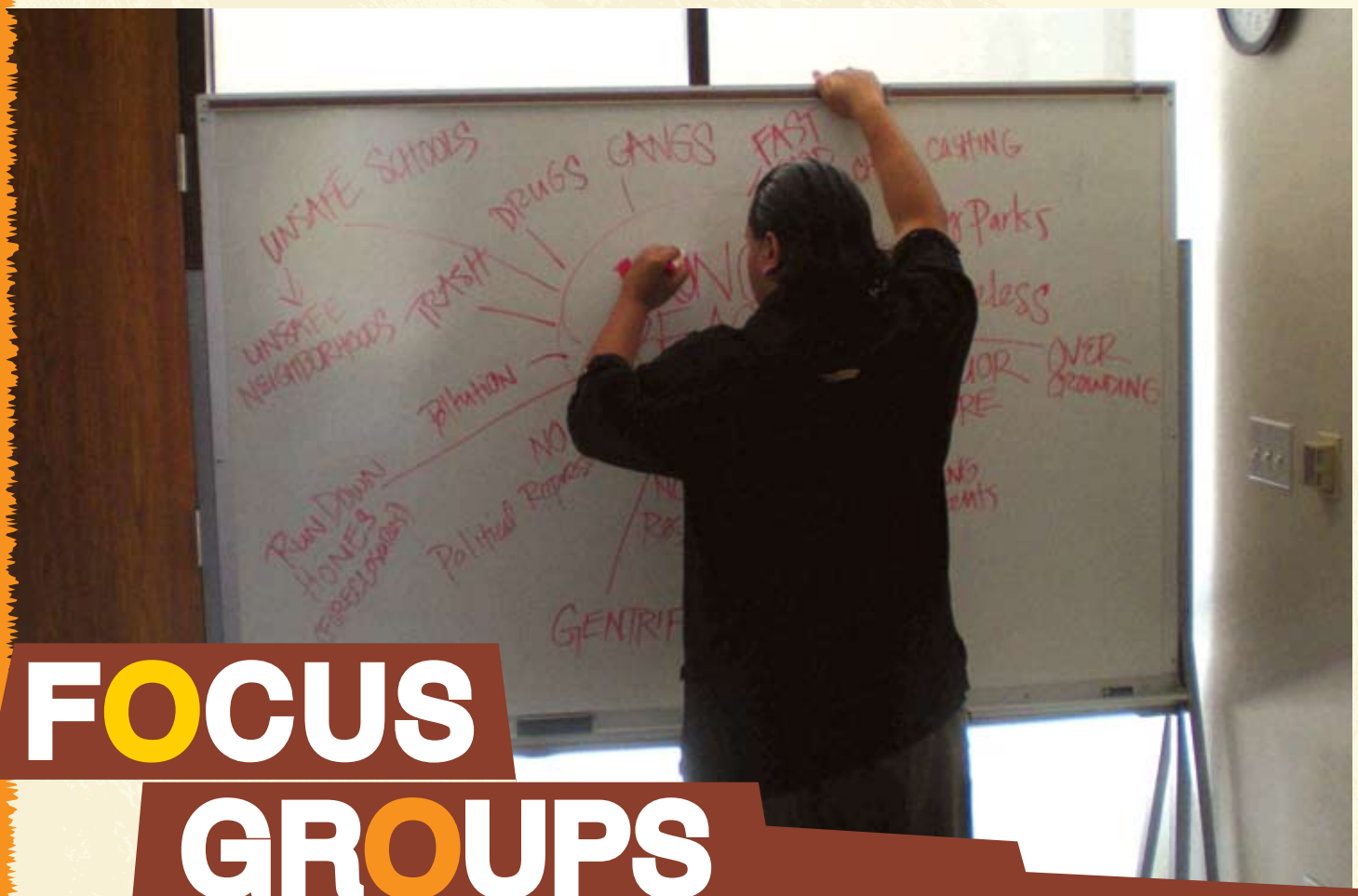
Youth informants spoke about a need for information and resources and finding such resources through social networks. Others noted that even with these resources, peers lacked the motivation and drive for success, with some believing that higher education was not an option for them.

"If anything, they were just as smart, like that was, that was the thing that was really, um, sad to me. A lot of my friends who were probably just as smart or smarter, they didn't, just the whole mindset wasn't there to go to college."

"I think they see education as an option or not really an option for them. I think youth see education as getting your high school diploma, that's all they can do....(education) is something they can't attain - You know like go to college-that's not for me. You know I have to graduate and help my family out."

Many of the informants recognized that there was an abundance of resources available, but there was also a great disconnect between the resources available and the way they were disseminated into the community, particularly to the youth and their parents. Many PIs depend on sports to carry their way through college and if that doesn't pan out, they lose interest in college altogether. Often in the athletic realm, students are guided and provided with resources to navigate the educational system; however, if they are injured no one is concerned with what happens to them and whether they remain and succeed in college. Without these guiding resources, students were lost and this led to probable dropout.

Overall, youth informants shared that creating programs to outreach to PI youth and having PI role models were effective tools to help youth be engaged in, pursue, and succeed in college. Youth informants also spoke about the need to engage parents as supporters. In particular, they wanted resources to help parents understand the educational process, since many were first generation families and, understanding the process can be overwhelming. Similar to adult informant recommendations, youth informants felt that working together to ensure that resources and support services were available would help youth achieve academic success. Informants also felt strongly that in order to reach the PI community with the appropriate educational resources, the key was to start early in educating and instilling the importance of education in the PI community. Most importantly, the community needed to be informed about how culture is not lost, but rather, valued, and can be integrated into the process of pursuing a higher education.



FOCUS GROUPS

7 focus groups were conducted with PI youth from diverse ethnic backgrounds with the majority of informants being students. Six out of the seven focus groups consisted of the informants who were of the same ethnic background (two focus groups consisted of informants from mixed PI backgrounds). In the case of one of the focus groups, FGH (see Table 2), had only one informant in attendance. The focus group facilitator continued with this informant, asking questions from the focus group guide so as to keep consistency and provide the informant with an incentive to compensate for travel and time.

Within the focus groups, certain themes were brought up more consistently than others; socioeconomic status, the surrounding home and school environment, competing priorities, as well as stereotypes and identity issues. These themes seemed to significantly influence the educational success of students. Informants all felt that their social, environmental and economic conditions made it challenging to succeed in education. Additionally, many PI youth were challenged with having to establish and work through their cultural and personal identity issues while combating existing stereotypes of PIs.

Table 2. Demographic breakdown of youth focus groups

Focus Group (FG)	Ethnicity	Involvement
FGA	5 Filipino/Guamanian, 1 Chamorro/Korean, 4 Chamorro	Students, community activist, mentor ages 21-33
FGB	7 Marshallese, 1 Marshallese/Japanese, 1 Pacific Islander/Marshallese	Students ages 15-23
FGC	2 Tongan	Students ages 18 and 21
FGD	9 Tongan	Students ages 14-23
FGE	3 Samoan, 1 Native Hawaiian, 1 Chamorro	Students (ages not available)
FGH	1 Native Hawaiian	Student age 16
FGI	2 Native Hawaiian	Students ages 13 and 15

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Focus group informants came from a variety of different environmental settings; however many informants described their neighborhoods as being low-income, in some cases, unsafe and also ethnically diverse. The school environment was described as mirroring the surrounding neighborhoods. Households were typically described as large within which both immediate and extended families reside.

Informants consistently mentioned the many competing priorities within the household between work, school, and in some cases, church. Informants often lived in households where there was little support from parents and differing perspectives on priorities, leaving the PI youth pressured to decide one or the other, between family and school.

"Well as far as, my brother, he's like mostly he's the man of the house so he makes sure that we all get our education and but my mom, her priority is different, like church is number one. That's the, that's the struggle I feel like with other Tongan families."

"My mom does too but she, her priority is different. Her priority is like; I feel like most Tongan parents their priorities are out of whack. Like church, Tongan function stuff, culture stuff like how they spend their money just. That' s why kids try to sell drugs and stuff cause they trying to get money for themselves. Or make money to...ends meet."

"but if it were something for church...my mom will give me twenty dollars or thirty dollars just to do that for that fundraiser. If it's for school it's like a waste of time. Like, I see it, like they push us to go to school, but they don't support us like check our homework, make sure we do our homework."

Similar to other key informant interviews, informants expressed the expectations placed on them by their families to get jobs and begin working to support the families after graduating from high school. This delayed, and at times, eliminated the opportunity to pursue a higher education.

"Um, well my parents, they expect, I mean we have high, uh, since my brother and sister didn't go to um, college and stuff, they expect me to, um, get that knowledge to pay everything for them and stuff, so, the expectations are high in my family."

BIOGRAPHY

NATASHA SAELUA

is a member of the Samoan community and works for access to higher education for Pacific Islander youth. Since graduating from UCLA in 2001, she has spent most of her time working at various Asian/Pacific Islander nonprofit organizations; participating in leadership activities; trainings; and organizing youth events. Natasha was actively involved with the Pacific Islands Student Association while at UCLA. While being an undergraduate, she dedicated much of her time to tutoring and mentoring youth in Carson, CA.

BIOGRAPHY

NEFARA D. RIESCH

(German/Samoan) graduated from the University of California Los Angeles, majoring in History. She is the site coordinator for the Pacific Islander Education and Retention Program at Carson High School. She also serves as the mentorship coordinator for a Student Retention Center program that targets American Indians and Pacific Islanders at UCLA. She plans to pursue her education into graduate studies, and hopes to become a History professor, specializing in Pacific Islander History.

Churches are often seen as urban villages outside of the islands.

BIOGRAPHY

SEFA AINA

graduated in 1997 from UCLA with a B.A. in History. Upon graduation, Sefa was hired by the UCLA Asian American Studies Center (AASC) Student/Community Projects (S/CP) Unit. S/CP serves as the liaison between the UCLA AASC and the local Asian American and Pacific Islander community. He was also the Instructor for a service learning course titled, "Asian Pacific American Leadership Development Project (APALDP)". Sefa is currently the Director for the Asian American Resource Center at Pomona College. He continues to work with students to foster leadership and participation in the Asian American and Pacific Islander community on campus and off. He is also working on the Pomona College Connections to the Community task force which seeks to strengthen relationships between the College and the larger community. Sefa has also served as an Instructor for Asian American Studies at CSU Fullerton (Pacific Islander Experience course), has also been a trainer for the APIA-U Program (Organization of Chinese Americans) and has sat on the Boards of many community based organizations.

SOCIAL SUPPORT

Due to different challenging circumstances, parental involvement was limited and in some cases, nonexistent in homes. Informants expressed the lack of role models, support and mentorship in the home, within peer support networks, and at school.

"...my mom's like into like worldly things like we should have better cars, better clothes and everything. That's how my brother ran off the line and went the other way. And um, like um, like, I know how my brother feels, cuz um, my mom you know (starting to cry) she's not really there. I only look up to my older sister. It's just, um, its hard cuz my dad is not there cuz he passed away. I try to look up to my older brother but you know he's not there like fully there. So my sister's the only like role model or something like that. But it's hard...living in my house. Everybody thinks that we're ok and everything...but it's, it's not. We have arguments like everyday. So...that's how my family is."

Within peer support networks, informants expressed that when their friends and other PI students were not pursuing higher education, this had a significant influence on their own educational pursuits.

"The people I hung out with didn't go to college."

"think that's, that's some...that's the new thing to do that, that something cool to join you know because like that is where your friends are at you want to be there too because that is where your friends are at, see look, and you don't have much support like uh, and you don't have that many other friends that support you in that case, so that what, I think that's what, makes you, makes you want to have..."

Support within schools was lacking as well; perhaps because there were perpetuated stereotypes within the school system that influenced PI students' educational success.

"But I realize like our counselors, like they don't expect...they don't have high expectations for Polynesians. When I went there, I was, I was, I had a good GPA so she was like oh, you're, oh you should go to honor classes you need like...and but then she goes, how come you're not in sports? And I said I don't want to play sports and then she's like, well you can get a scholarship by that and she's like saying every Polynesian plays sports she was saying like I had to play sports just to get out, to get out of, like to, to get a scholarship somewhere and I was like I know what she was saying was a good thing but how she said it to me it was like..."

STEREOTYPES/IDENTITY

Informants felt strongly that existing stereotypes of PI youth made it difficult to push through and succeed in education. Stereotypes were so prevalent that PI students began to believe them also. As a result, stereotypes were further perpetuated within the PI community and contributed to the pressure on youth. The added task of combating these inflicted stereotypes stressed the already overwhelmed students as they seek to establish their identity as PIs.

"they dropped out because they were actually pregnant or, you know, um, not interested in school. And I just see them you know in the streets. And like I tell them that oh, I am still in school. And they are like oh yeah, I'm over here selling drugs and stuff. Most of my friends are, they dropped out like, some of my friends they dropped out middle school because they got knocked up or something. Um, it was like, everyone expected me to either get knocked up or out of all of my friends, then they all got knocked up or, you know."

Many PI students rely on sports as their sole mean to get into college. Without the promise of an athletic scholarship, many PI youth are not informed about alternative ways to pursue higher education, thus, making it easier to delay or give up on pursuing an education.

"I DIDN'T REALLY HAVE A MAIN SUPPORT PERSON BUT THE ONE THING THAT I RELIED ON THE MOST MY FOUR YEARS IN HIGH SCHOOL WAS SPORTS AND IT WAS FOOTBALL BECAUSE A LOT OF US RELY ON FOOTBALL...A LOT OF US GO ON TO COLLEGE WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE AND WE'RE JUST PLAYING BALL, BUT WE DON'T EVER HAVE A BACKUP PLAN."

"But uh, you know like uh, I think for school-wise like uh us Polynesians look at sports taking us to the next level. They, they forget about the you know the, the paperwork, the you know the studying' and all that, like you know, they think that, that by uh, you know like uh, like proving them that sports or that image you know like uh and burying yourself in that, they forget all the other stuff?"

Pacific Islander identity is often preserved through cultural song and dance. Stories are told in the dancer's movements.

BIOGRAPHY

KEITH L. CAMACHO

is an Assistant Professor of Asian-American and Pacific Islander Studies at UCLA. He received his Ph.D. in Pacific Studies from the University of Hawai`i at Manoa, where he wrote a dissertation about indigenous memories of World War II on both Saipan and Guam. He is the eldest son, among three boys, in the family of Juan C. Camacho (Pakito/Potu) and Barbara L. Camacho (Capili). He is a native of Guam, and his family extends throughout Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. Keith has presented award-winning papers throughout the Pacific on topics including "Native Cultural Studies in the Pacific Islands" and "Culture and History in Guam." Mr. Camacho's published work also includes essays, book reviews, and poetry.

IV. Proposed Plan

The PIHCPP is in the process of developing an effective and sustainable pipeline program based on needs assessment results included in this report which include building self confidence and pride, reducing economic barriers, mental health and social support, access to higher education opportunities, mentorship and training, exposure to health careers, and application assistance.

Students that participate in this pipeline program will gain the knowledge, experience, set goals, participate in community service learning at partner sites, receive ongoing mentoring and support from other PI and other health professionals, and gain access to the tools they need to gain access to health professions programs and schools. In addition, PIHCPP will focus efforts on policy change by working with scholarship and financial aid programs to provide accessibility for PIs, working with health professions training and programs to improve outreach and recruitment strategies for PIs, as well as developing a fellowship program and curriculum for PI students to engage in health care workforce development. The hope is that this PI fellowship program will create learning modules that can be adopted within educational systems. The modules will not only teach skills but also be culturally sensitive and salient for PI students and students interested in learning about PI communities.

Participants in the fellowship program will meet other PI health professionals who will continually guide and mentor them as well as provide opportunities to be exposed to the policy, clinical, social-cultural, and research aspects of the health field.

By the end of their fellowship, students will have received assistance on developing their plans for health professions program/graduate study, assistance on their application including the costs to submit their applications, finding financial aid or scholarships, increasing their application and background to be competitive, exposure to the health field, and support and counseling to build their confidence in furthering their education and/or experience. There is hope to build their understanding of the disparities in health, its impact on PIs, and perhaps find ways that they can address these issues to promote a healthy community.

PIHCPP is seeking to encourage PI youth to enter into health professions by developing a program that:

- Offers a training program and curriculum for PIs to engage in health care workforce development
- Develops partnerships with scholarships and financial aid programs that make it a policy to improve their accessibility for PIs
- Develops agreements with health professional training programs and universities, who will develop policies to improve outreach and recruitment strategies to PIs
- **PIHCPP**
- Increases awareness and knowledge among health professional training programs and universities regarding the need to recruit PIs into health careers
- Annually educates young PIs about health career opportunities and the health career field

EMENT

By role modeling with PI leaders, sharing information and resources, and providing access to a collegiate campus (campus visits and campus housing) there's hope that students will engage in meaningful conversations with peers about the challenges and opportunities of pursuing higher education. Through these networks, there's hope to form a social support network for PI students that will enable them to seek their own success and also serve as mentors and role models for others in the future. PIHCPP will continue to work with local educators and administrators from high schools to colleges to address better serving current PI students to ensure academic success that allows them to develop and grow as strong community members. By ensuring academic success, there's hope to strengthen the pipeline of Pacific Islander community leaders to ensure health and well-being in our communities.

V. Policy Recommendations | based on the Spectrum of Prevention

Influencing Policy and Legislation

Work with funding organizations to strategically develop ways to increase advocacy efforts promoting PIHCPP and higher education among Pacific Islanders.

Meet with local and state legislators to provide information about PIHCPP and its potential positive impact on the Pacific Islander community.

Changing Organizational Practices

Work with financial aid organizations to recognize and assist Pacific Islander students in accessing higher education policy and/or infrastructural changes within the organization.

Work with college administrators and professors to develop initiatives and policies to increase Pacific Islander enrollment and offer resources and opportunities to Pacific Islander youth.

Fostering Coalitions and Networks

Form partnerships among academic institutions, community based organizations, high schools, and key stakeholders and administrators who will commit to helping increase the number of Pacific Islanders in the healthcare workforce.

Develop and convene a community advisory board – comprised of key leaders and stakeholders within the community – to develop and oversee the development of pipeline-related initiatives and activities.

Educating Providers

Continue to educate providers (high school and college administrators/officials, academic counselors, financial aid officials) of the widening gap between enrollment of Pacific Islanders in high schools/colleges and the lack of Pacific Islanders in the health workforce.

Educate providers about how to provide services in a culturally competent and sensitive manner.

Promoting Community Education

Engage and help parents to understand the educational process.

Provide resources and informational workshops to parents addressing the value of education as well as ways in which they can engage and support their children.

Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills

Share educational information and resources to youth so they know what resources are available and can make an informed decision.

- Outreach and engage students by going to them to share resources.
- Provide venues for PI students to meet each other, learn about the value of education, steps to pursue a higher education, and how to navigate the educational system.

Seek and develop opportunities to actively/proactively engage students in pipeline programs and activities.

- Recruit students to be mentors themselves.
- "Train the Trainers"- Train students, who have embraced and experienced the value of education- to share resources with other students.

BIOGRAPHY

ASHLEY CHERI

Ashley Cheri graduated from California State University, Fullerton with a Bachelors of Science degree in Health Science. While in college Ashley was an active member of Gamma Phi Beta International Sorority, donating much of her time and efforts to their philanthropy, Campfire USA. Ashley currently works at OCAPICA in the youth programs department as a Program Coordinator. Taking great interest in high school youth and their future, she works on three programs which allow her the opportunity to help further the success of our youth. Ashley works on the Pacific Islander Pipeline program, Pacific Islander College Bound program, and the Young Leading Women (YLW) leadership program. Being Pacific Islander herself, this position has allowed her greater opportunity to get to know her family roots, learn about the other Pacific Island cultures and give back to a part of her family history she never imagined having the opportunity to work with.

COMMUNITY VOICES

"Even with all the violence and crime that was going on during that time, our summer was being occupied by the culturally relevant PI Youth Alliance. I don't really know how much the hood has changed from when I was growing up, besides Geneva Towers being demolished and all complexes are painted from ground up; Some are slowly taking pro-active approaches instead of always working in crisis mode, but we are still playing the survival game..."

"Many times we [the hood] were our own enemy, but what I've also noticed growing up was that we were also our own remedy!"

Ursula Siataga, attended City College of San Francisco, Sacramento City College, and graduated with a B.A. in Asian American Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. She is currently a Case Manager with the Asian Recovery Services, serving and providing resources for youth and their families.

VI. Acknowledgements

Marshallese Youth

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GATHERING OF YOUNG PACIFIC ISLANDERS

September 21, 2007 at
The California Endowment, San Diego, CA

Agnes Smith (South Pacific Islander Cultural Association / Cal State Fullerton)
Alek A. Sripipatana (UCLA)
Alyssa Purificacion (Pacific Islander Association / Cal State Long Beach)
Amanda Fehoko (Pacific Islander Association / Cal State Long Beach)
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Dr. Sora Park Tanjasiri (Cal State Fullerton)
Emerald Kapi'olani Ku'ulei Adams (Indigenous Pacific Islander Alliance / Cal Berkeley)
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Migetu Tuncap (Indigenous Pacific Islander Association / Cal Berkeley)
Natasha Saelua (City Search)
Nefara D. Riesch (Pacific Islander Education & Retention / UCLA)
Paul Keju (Assembly of God, San Diego)
Sedfrey Linsangan (South Pacific Islander Cultural Association / Cal State Fullerton)
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Guam Communications Network
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Tongan Community Service Center/Special Service Groups
Union of Pan Asian Communities
Weaving an Islander Network for Cancer Awareness, Research and Training (WINCART)
Promoting Access to Health for Pacific Islander and Southeast Asian Women (REACH US PATH for Women)

"O le ala i le pule o le tautua"

Serving others will lead in the right path to success
[A Samoan proverb]

VII. Resources

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THE INSIDE STORY
Behind the Cover Design

We were consumed by the layout and style of the content pages that we really hadn't locked down a design concept for the cover. We knew it needed to be compelling, evoke a sense of cultural passion for both the youth and our elders, as well as display some kind of representation of a pipeline program.

Initially we came up with a pretty cool, but very elaborate concept that would have required either setting up a photo shoot, or hiring an illustrator to create the imagery needed for the cover. With less than 72 hours left for the report to go to print, this idea was an unlikely option. We were stuck - and we were running out of time!

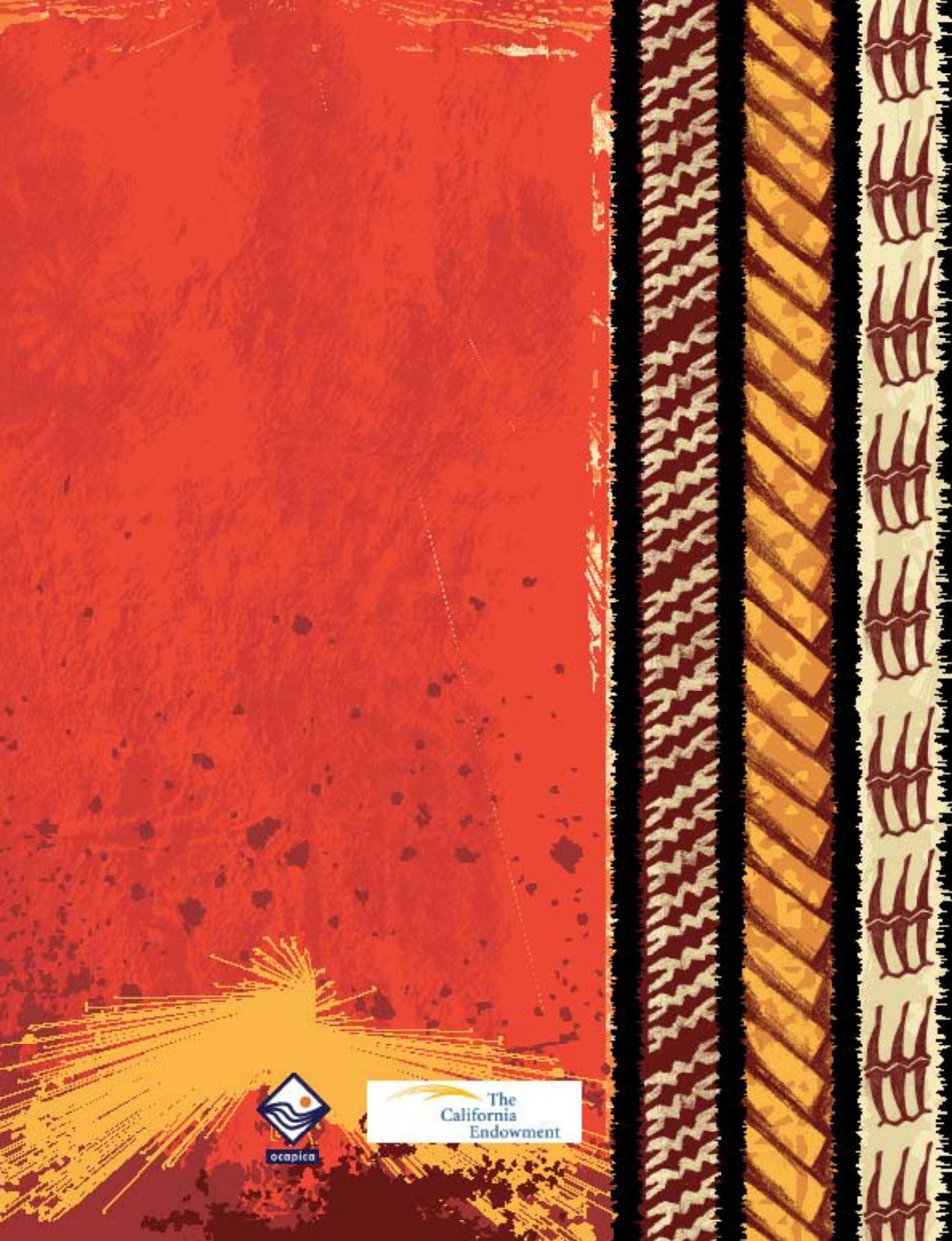
I then called upon a friend that I collaborate with on design concepts from time to time, to meet me at my studio within the hour. With our backs against the wall he showed up and we went right to work. I explained the idea behind the pipeline program, we reviewed our previous sketches and ideas, then showed him what we had so far on the report's design. During our conversation I was looking at his Polynesian style tattoos along his arm, asking him their meanings, along with looking at tapa and tattoo patterns from Micronesia and Melanesia. As we spoke, the concept started to develop and take form in my mind. Through our discussion the cover idea was verbally taking shape; from taking a piece of Fijian masi (tapa) and lining it up to my friend's Samoan tattoo pattern of a symbolic rope; to remembering a conversation with a Chamoru friend about dolphin tattoo patterns widely used throughout Micronesia; then finding an album cover with some very cool textures. A sketch here, a line there, and mental lightbulbs popping up everywhere... we all then smiled and breathed a huge sigh of relief - within 20 minutes our cover concept was born!

As you look at the front cover of this report, you will see that the vertical linear motifs are actually a cultural representation of a pipeline. From right to left, the first line represents Melanesia, a motif pattern commonly used in Fijian masi. The second line represents Polynesia, a Samoan and Tongan tattoo pattern symbolizing the rope that ties your family to you for strength. The third line represents Micronesia showing dolphin tattoo motifs commonly used in Chamoru culture. The red, fiery texture that you see is reminiscent of hot molten lava, the substance of which our islands were formed - the beginning of life. As you flip open the cover so that the front and back flaps are open-faced to you, the pipeline concept becomes clearer; the Melanesian and Polynesian linear motifs on the left and right create the sides of the pipeline. The patterns themselves form an arrow-like design pointing upwards in a positive direction. The Micronesian linear motifs in the center create the inner workings of the pipeline, where water flows, where the dolphins swim, where life flows - upwards in a positive direction. Our people, our culture, creating positive opportunities such as this Pipeline Health Careers Program, so that our future can move in a positive direction.

Designed by
Jason Pereira
for
jpsouthpacific

With love and respect for our community.

Reprinted July 2009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