



OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PROMOTIONS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GCC awards completion certificates for Substance Abuse Prevention & Treatment

The Guam Community College awarded Course Series Completion Certificates on Substance Abuse Prevention & Treatment to eight (8) paraprofessionals in the substance abuse prevention and treatment field during a ceremony at the GCC Student Center Training Room on December 30, 2017. The trained paraprofessionals represented the Guam Behavioral Health & Wellness Center, WestCare Pacific Islands, the Lighthouse Recovery Center, Oasis Empowerment Center and the Department of Labor Employment Program.

The course series was made possible through a regional workforce development grant funded by the Health Resources Services Administration to the Pacific Behavioral Health Collaborating Council (PBHCC) – a regional association comprised of behavioral health leaders from the six (6) U.S.-affiliated Pacific jurisdictions including American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, the Marshall Islands, and Palau.

This HRSA funded initiative aims to enhance the regional workforce development capacity for certified substance abuse counselors and substance abuse prevention specialists, as well as to develop academic programs and curriculum in this specialized field.

Through a Memorandum of Agreement between the PBHCC and GCC, five (5) substance abuse prevention and treatment courses were developed and offered, culminating in 225 formal instructional hours. These courses prepared the participants to take the certification exam.

In his remarks to the completers, Dr. Ray Somera, GCC Acting President and Vice President for Academic Affairs said, “This is a major step to help people win their individual wars against drugs and/or alcohol. Through this training, you are on your way to making a difference not only for a person struggling with substance abuse issues, but also, for every life that person touches.”

Joining Dr. Somera was Director Ray Vega from the Guam Behavioral Health & Wellness Center, who also served as the PBHCC representative. “Today, an important leaf has been turned. So many need the help by trained counselors and your accomplishments signal the growth in the helping field. Not everyone can do what you do; it takes an exceptional person to do this work and gifted people like yourselves. Congratulations,” Vega said.

The ceremony was attended by faculty, family, friends, co-workers and representatives from the participating agencies.

Suggested photo caption: GCC awarded Course Series Completion Certificates on Substance Abuse Prevention & Treatment to eight (8) paraprofessionals in the substance abuse prevention and treatment field during a ceremony at the GCC Student Center Training Room on December 30, 2017.

Front row from left: Dr. KristiAnna Santos; BeverlyJo Torres; Annmarie Pangelinan; Samantha Eliptico; and Athena Duenas.

Standing from left: Dean Toves; J. Peter Roberto, chair, GCC CJSS Dept.; Grace Rosadino; Francisco Blas Jr.; Eric Borja; Rey Vega, GBHWC Director; Daphne Sabang; Dr. Ray Somera, GCC Academic VP; and Barbara S.N. Benavente.

Back row: Derek Uebbing and Robert Dames.