



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Start-up Micronesia 2025: Celebrating Innovation, Collaboration, and Entrepreneurial Spirit

Micronesia – The Pacific Islands Small Business Development Center Network (PISBDCN) is proud to announce the successful conclusion of Start-up Micronesia 2025, a dynamic event that brought together aspiring entrepreneurs, innovators, and business enthusiasts from across the region.

From June 18–21, 2025, participants from Guam, the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia—such as Yap, Chuuk, and Kosrae—converged to transform ideas into action, turning concepts into tangible startup ventures. Start-up Micronesia took place once again in person, hosted by each island's respective Small Business Development Center.

Throughout the intense 54-hour event, attendees engaged in collaborative brainstorming sessions, honed their pitches, and worked tirelessly to develop innovative solutions to real-world problems. Under the guidance of experienced mentors and industry experts, teams navigated challenges, embraced creativity, and fostered a spirit of entrepreneurship that embodies the essence of Micronesia's thriving business community.



Guam Local Winners, Judges and Mentors

Back Row: (Ken Hizon, SBDC Business Advisor, Jarneec' Halsey SBDC Business Advisor/WIB Program Coordinator, (Participate) Rob Jackson, CEO, The M.O.S.T Services, (Participate) Charlie Hermosa, CEO-Co Founder Bella Wings Aviation, Michael Tajjeron, SBDC Associate Network Director, Brian San Nicolas Independent Small Business Advisor.

Front Row: (Judge) Joshua Miller, Executive Director, (Judge) JA, Sharon Davis, Sr. Vice President, Community and External Affairs, GTA, (Judge) Pinki Lujan, Industry Development Specialist Guam Economic Development Authority (GEDA), (Judge) Tricia Granillo, Vice President Government Accounts and Marketing, AM Insurance.



1st Place Regional Winners: Left to right.
Regional Winners - OceanLink
 Rob Jackson, CEO, The M.O.S.T Services
 and Charlie Hermosa, CEO-Co Founder
 Bella Wings Aviation.

As part of the program, winners from each local island competition received cash prizes, recognizing their hard work and ingenuity. The local champions then advanced to the regional competition, where the top three regional teams were awarded additional cash rewards for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.

After a showcase of hard work and determination across each island, the judges reached their verdict. It is with great pleasure that we announce the winners of Start-up Micronesia 2025:

- 1st Place: *OceanLink* – Guam



- 2nd Place: *Chuuk Harvest Corporation* – Chuuk
- 3rd Place: *Makontowe Spring Water* – Kosrae

Each winning team demonstrated outstanding innovation, dedication, and the potential to make a meaningful impact within their communities and beyond. We extend heartfelt congratulations to them and recognize all participants for their passion, resilience, and commitment to nurturing economic growth across Micronesia.



2nd Place Regional Winners: Left to right.
Chuuk Harvest Corporation
Melmarie Walliby, Chenifa Ray, and Benereen Shirai



3rd Place Regional Winners: Left to right.
Makontowe Spring Water
Robert Richard G. George, Benur Lonno, & Sheral G. George

Start-up Micronesia 2025 would not have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors, partners, mentors, volunteers, and the unwavering enthusiasm of the Micronesian entrepreneurial ecosystem. Special thanks to:

AM Insurance, Ada's Trust & Investment Inc., Market Deli, GTA Teleguam, Deal Fair, Inc., Bank of Federated States of Micronesia, NJ Store, FSM Telecommunication (Chuuk Branch), PK Mart, ROC Taiwan Embassy RMI, RMI National Telecommunication Authority, Marshall Islands Marine Resources

Authority, Elegance SPA, Air Marshall Islands, Marshalls Japan Construction Company, Marshall Islands Resort, Island Pride Supermarket, Formosa Super Market, Majuro True Value, Marshall Islands Journal, Tobolar Copra Processing Authority and iBoom Telecommunication.

We would also like to extend special recognition to the individuals whose voices and leadership helped shape and elevate this event:

- Dr. Anita Borja-Enriquez, *President, University of Guam*
- Dr. Roseann Jones, *Dean, University of Guam School of Business and Public Administration*



- Frederick Granillo, *Network Director, Pacific Islands Small Business Development Center Network*

We also recognize the contribution of our regional judges:

- Jamie Aingimea, *Senior Loan Officer, Pacific Islands Development Bank*
- Kenneth Lujan, *Former Manager, U.S. Small Business Administration Guam Branch Office*

And finally, our deepest gratitude goes to Faith Antol, *Network Program Associate at the Pacific Islands Small Business Development Center Network*, whose coordination and leadership across the entire Micronesia region made Start-up Micronesia 2025 a resounding success!

As we reflect on the inspiring journey of Start-up Micronesia 2025, we look ahead with optimism and determination. Together, we will continue empowering entrepreneurs, cultivating innovation, and driving sustainable economic development across the Pacific Islands region.

For more information about Start-up Micronesia and the Pacific Islands Small Business Development Center Network, please contact the SBDC Lead Center at 671-735-2590 or sbdc@pacificsbdc.com.

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[Note to Editors: Images and additional information about the winning teams are available upon request.]