

First graduating class for Chuuk's Trial Counselor's Program

On December 20, 2019, the College of Micronesia Trial Counselor's Program in Chuuk held its commencement ceremony for ten (10) students who completed the program. The commencement exercise was held at the FSM Supreme Court in Chuuk.

Although courses were taught from 2004 to 2007 in Chuuk, because of a lack of instructors, the program did not produce a graduating class. After a 15- year absence, this program restarted in January of 2019, with its first graduating class in December of 2019.

This program serves two main purposes. First, it serves as a stepping stone to those who want to pursue a legal education. Graduates from this program have gone on to continue their legal education in the U.S., China, and at the University of South Pacific.

This program also prepares current and aspiring legal practitioners. The 10 courses offered in the program are designed to give students exposure to basic legal principles and rules of law, and prepares individuals to take the FSM Bar exam and to enter into the legal field. A one (1) year externship is required before being eligible to sit for the FSM Bar exam.

The program has found on-going success in Pohnpei through the College of Micronesia national campus, where classes have been held since the inception of the program in 1995. Courses were also taught in Yap for a short period, but also because of a lack of instructors, classes are currently not being held.

The courses offered in the program are: 1) Contracts, 2) Criminal Law, 3) Torts, 4) Legal Research & Writing, 5) Constitutional Law, 6) Criminal Procedure, 7) Civil Procedure, 8) Property, 9) Evidence, and 10) Trial Practice. Assuming that there are enough instructors, students usually take one (1) year to complete the ten (10) course program.

The courses in Chuuk were taught by Sabino Asor, Attorney General of Chuuk State, Kembo Mida Jr., Chief Executive Officer of the Chuuk Public Utility Corporation, Daniel Rescue Jr., Directing Attorney for the Micronesian Legal Services Corporation Chuuk office, Lukas Padegimas, Staff Attorney for the Chuuk State Supreme Court, and Mark Jesperson, Staff Attorney for the Micronesian Legal Services Corporation Chuuk office.

The following is a list of the graduates: Calvin Assito, Ioster Ifenuk, Otoko Kannys, Jonvan Kando, Fanes Meika, Sampora Moses, Redeemer Nelson, Josef Rold, Pastor Suzuki, and Kind Kando.