



NEWSLETTER

PORT AUTHORITY OF GUAM

JULY 2025



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Chairperson
Conchita S.N. Taitano
Vice Chairperson
Fe Valencia-Ovalles
Board Secretary
Mark B.C. Mendiola
Board Member

Port Management

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General Manager
Dominic G. Muna
Deputy General Manager Operations
Pacifico R. Martir
Deputy General Manager Administration and Finance

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Port Breaks Ground on Warehouse 1 Project



The Port Authority of Guam held a groundbreaking ceremony on July 14, 2025 to officially launch the Warehouse 1 Building Maintenance Project, a major infrastructure initiative aimed at enhancing safety and modernizing one of the Port's most critical facilities.

Originally constructed in 1967–1968, Warehouse 1 is a 54,000-square-foot structure vital to daily operations and home to numerous Port employees and tenants. The \$4.8 million project, funded by the Port Authority and awarded to BME & Sons, Inc., will include comprehensive structural

repairs to address concrete cracks and spalling, mitigation of salt and water intrusion, and the application of a protective silicone roof coating. In addition, the project features the complete replacement of outdated electrical and fire protection systems, ensuring a safe and reliable work environment for years to come.

Governor Lou Leon Guerrero and Lt. Governor Josh Tenorio both addressed attendees, underscoring the importance of investing in critical infrastructure and creating a safe, modern environment for all Port personnel.

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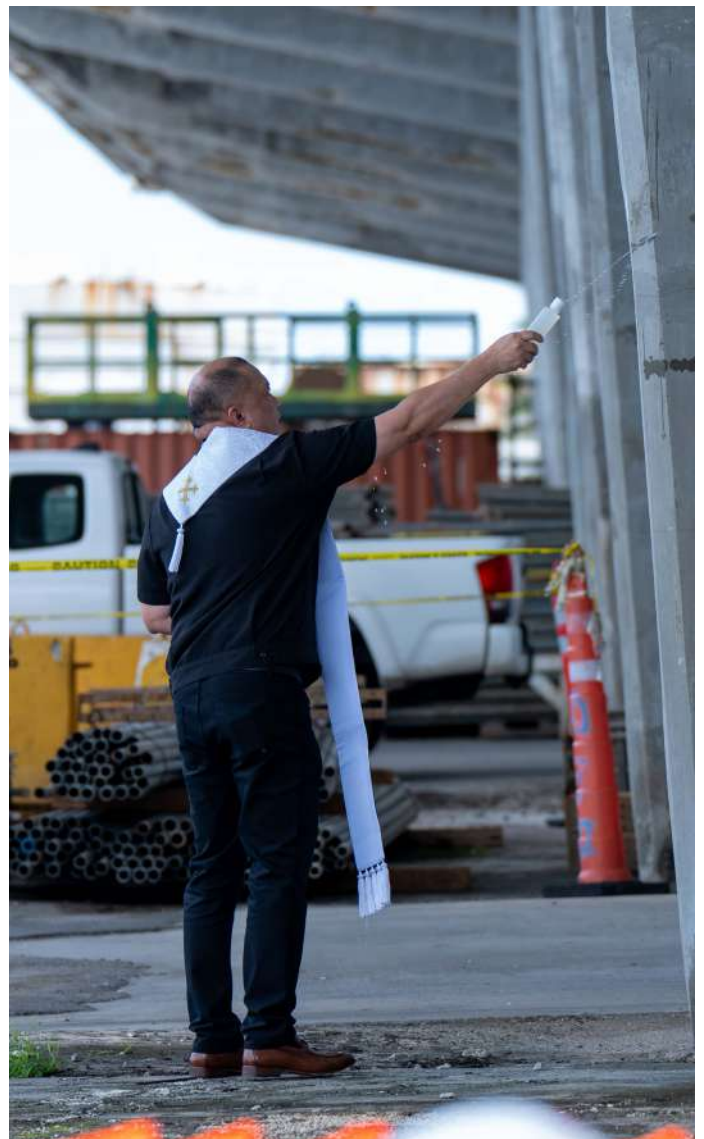


The event also included the swearing-in ceremony of two Port Authority board members: returning board member Conchita S.N. Taitano and newly-appointed member Mark B.C. Mendiola. Their leadership and expertise will help guide the Port's ongoing modernization efforts.

Additionally, Reverend Father Danilo T. Ferrandiz conducted a special blessing of the Port's newly arrived yard equipment, which includes five new forklifts acquired through a U.S. Department of Transportation grant, as well as tractors, top loaders, side loaders, and other essential equipment to enhance the Port's operational efficiency.

"This project underscores our commitment to investing in the safety and resilience of the Port's infrastructure," said Port General Manager Rory J. Respicio. "By revitalizing Warehouse 1 and modernizing our equipment fleet, we are strengthening the foundation for future growth and reinforcing our role as Guam's critical gateway for commerce. All of this progress is possible thanks to the continued hard work and dedication of our Port employees every day, and with the steadfast support of Governor Lou Leon Guerrero, Lt. Governor Josh Tenorio, and our Board of Directors."

The Warehouse 1 Building Maintenance Project is expected to be completed by December 8, 2026, under Project Number PAG-CIP-024-004.





The Port Authority of Guam, in partnership with the Department of Labor, proudly captured First Place in the Government of Guam category at the 81st Liberation Day Parade Float competition held on July 21, 2025. This prestigious win celebrates the vibrant spirit of “Fanohge CHamoru,” or “Stand Ye Guamanians,” which was skillfully brought to life through the creativity, teamwork, and dedication of our incredible Port Strong family.

From the initial concept to the final construction, the float was a powerful tribute to the resilience of the CHamoru people and the enduring power of unity. Built using authentic local materials including bamboo, lumot (moss), coconut leaves, and various local foliage and flowers, the design authentically reflected our island heritage. Riders on the float represented this unity in diversity, dressed in a striking combination of military uniforms, native cultural attire, and present-day wear, symbolizing Guam’s journey through history to the present.

The celebration extended beyond the float itself. At the Hagåtña Marina, Port employees, family, and friends gathered to watch the parade unfold. As the winning float made its way toward the Governor and Lt. Governor’s grandstand, many eagerly joined in, marching alongside the float in a show of collective pride.

The significance of the win was further



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highlighted the following day when KUAM interviewed General Manager Rory J. Respicio and Department of Labor Deputy Director Jerry Toves to discuss the achievement.

“Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of this year’s Liberation Day festivities, from the float construction to the onsite preparations at the Hagatna Marina,” said General Manager Respicio. “This award belongs

to the entire team whose hard work and spirit truly embodied the ‘Fanohge CHamoru’ theme.”

This victory is a testament to the Port Authority’s commitment to honoring our island’s culture and history while fostering a strong sense of community and teamwork among our employees and partners. Congratulations to the entire Port Strong family and our friends at the Department of Labor on this outstanding accomplishment!



Updates on Glass Breakwater Project

The Port Authority of Guam Board of Directors received an in-depth presentation from Black Construction Corporation President Leonard Kaae, who provided updates on the Glass Breakwater Project and its anticipated operational and infrastructure benefits within the Cabras Island area.

The following resolutions were passed:

- Resolution No. 2025-21, renaming the “old Hawaiian Rock site” to “Black Construction Site” to reflect its current operational use;
- Resolution No. 2025-22, establishing the official policy for tenant-funded infrastructure improvement lease offsets pursuant to Public Law 38-26;
- Resolution No. 2025-23, authorizing an initial lease credit, dollar-for-dollar offset to cover eligible project expenses immediately required;
- Resolution No. 2025-24, requesting to amend the title of the Port Master Plan from “2023” to “2025,” aligning with updated sustainability



- goals while maintaining the plan’s substance;
- Resolution No. 2025-25, approving updated lease rates for Port tenants based on certified appraisals and statutory compliance; and
- Resolution No. 2025-26, recognizing Oracle Advance Customer Service for five years of dedicated partnership with the Port Authority of Guam.

Tariff Petition Filed to Update Labor Charges

The Port Authority of Guam has filed a petition with the Guam Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to update labor billing rates tied specifically to vessel operations. The proposed correction applies only to labor and equipment services tied to vessel operations that the Port already performs. It does not raise wharfage, fuel surcharges, facility maintenance fees, lease rates, or crane charges.

“This is not a general tariff increase,” said Port General Manager Rory J. Respicio. “We are correcting outdated billing for work that continues every day.”

The proposed rates are based on the average of the lowest and highest pay levels within each job classification, along with administrative surcharges already authorized in the tariff. These labor billing rates have not been updated since 2020.

This petition is narrowly focused on vessel labor and equipment billing using 2025 cost data. While the adjustment averages 17 percent across job classifications, this is not a 17 percent increase to shipping costs or consumer prices.

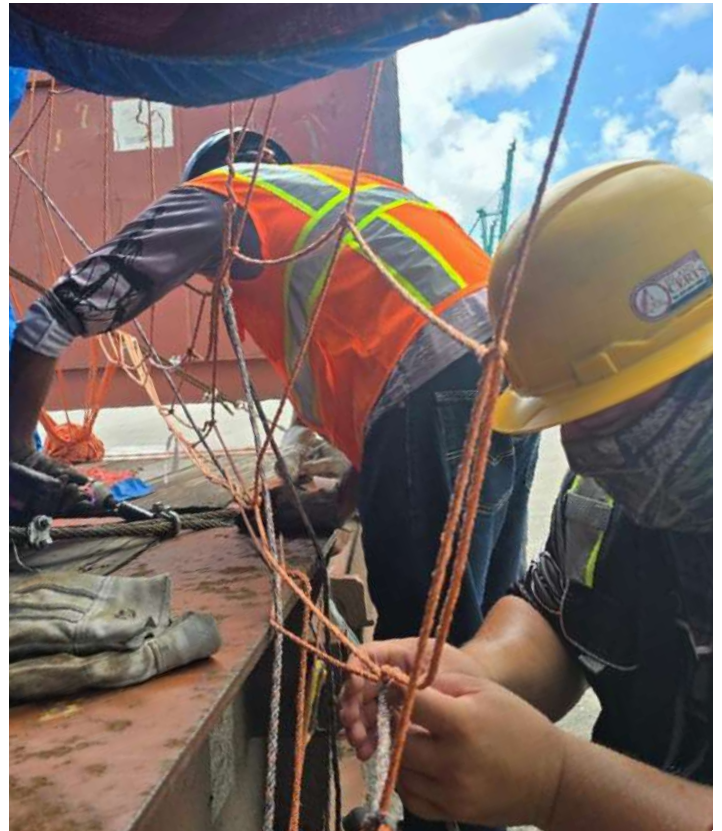
In fact, the impact to individual goods is a fraction of a penny. For example:

- A can of Spam will go up by less than one-tenth of a cent
- A 20-pound bag of rice by about two and a half cents
- A case of canned goods by just over a tenth of a cent per unit

These examples illustrate the limited impact of the cost shift. The 17 percent figure applies to specific labor and equipment line items billed to shipping carriers, not to the full tariff and not to your grocery bill.

The adjustment will roll out in two phases: 8.5 percent for the first four months, then 17 percent beginning in the fifth month. The phased approach gives customers time to plan and prevents abrupt cost shifts.

Board Resolution No. 2025-09 supports the petition, which is consistent with the requirements of PAG Docket 17-01. The Consumer Price Index has surpassed the 4% threshold, and container throughput has declined by more than 5%. These two conditions trigger the Port’s eligibility for a broader general adjustment. However, the Port is not pursuing a general rate increase.



This petition is narrowly focused on vessel labor and equipment billing using 2025 cost data. While the average adjustment is 17 percent across classifications, it does not translate to a 17 percent increase in shipping costs. As shown above, the real impact on common consumer goods remains minimal.

It is also important to clarify that the labor rates shown in the petition are not the direct salaries of Port employees. They reflect what carriers are billed for services, including benefit costs, payroll taxes, administrative surcharges, and other support costs that are all permitted under the tariff.

In addition to labor billing updates, the petition includes a correction to equipment cost related rates tied specifically to vessel operations. These reflect actual 2025 operating and replacement costs and are consistent with provisions already authorized under the tariff. The combined labor and equipment adjustments result in the 17 percent average cited in the petition.

“We’re not introducing anything new,” Respicio said. “We’re correcting a gap in how labor and equipment services are billed. The work

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is already being done. This is a targeted update based on real 2025 labor and equipment costs. It does not affect any other fees.”

The Port also honored a commitment made in 2021 by holding off on any tariff increases during fiscal years 2022 and 2023 in connection with the \$15 million American Rescue Plan grant awarded by Governor Lou Leon Guerrero and Lieutenant Governor Josh Tenorio.

Despite operating under the same \$4.8 million monthly allotment since 2019, the Port has continued to meet higher demands and deliver high standards. At the same time, the Port

secured more than \$106 million in federal funds for modernization efforts, including yard equipment, wharf upgrades, shoreline protection, lighting, and crane assessments over the past decade.

“This petition demonstrates the Port’s internal capability and fiscal discipline,” Respicio added. “Our Chief Financial Officer Jojo Guevara and the Finance Division prepared the full cost analysis and PUC petition in-house. It’s a straightforward adjustment rooted in data, based on work we already perform, and handled exactly the way any well-run business would with fairness, restraint, and accuracy.”

Port, Partners and CISA Concluded Assessment Program



The Port Authority of Guam, in partnership with the Commonwealth Ports Authority, maritime industry leaders, and military partners, gathered on July 10, 2025 at the Guam Community College for the out brief presentation of the Guam/ Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Regional Resiliency Assessment Program (RRAP).

The RRAP, a collaborative effort awarded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), focused on a comprehensive cyber and physical security assessment of the Port Authority of Guam and the Commonwealth Ports Authority. Launched in November 2022, the program aims to strengthen the resilience and security of the region’s critical maritime infrastructure.

During the out brief, CISA presented key findings and recommendations to enhance the

operational resilience of Guam and CNMI ports. Key outcomes included:

- Regional collaboration: Strengthen ties between Guam, the CNMI, and federal and military partners to improve coordinated responses and shared solutions via formal regional plans and agreements to ensure continuity during emergencies.
- Alternate port planning: Identify opportunities to develop Rota and other regional ports as viable alternate options, enhancing flexibility.
- Enhance infrastructure funding pathways: Leverage new funding strategies and partnerships to support long-term port development and strengthen regional resilience.
- Cybersecurity enhancement: Advancing efforts to modernize systems and improve

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cybersecurity readiness, ensuring ports remain secure and adaptable to emerging threats.

- Communication resilience: Enhancing communication networks and coordination capabilities to ensure seamless operations and rapid response during emergencies.

Additionally, CISA introduced the Maritime Domain Awareness Tool, a new planning resource designed to help stakeholders make quick and informed decisions during maritime emergencies by providing detailed data on regional ports and operational scenarios.

Port General Manager Rory J. Respicio commended the collaborative effort, acknowledging Governor Lou Leon Guerrero, Lieutenant Governor Josh Tenorio, and the Port's Board of Directors for their continued support and leadership in facilitating the partnership with federal and local entities, including the Commonwealth Ports Authority. Respicio also recognized the Port's Planning Division for its work in supporting

the development of the plan and noted they "did an outstanding job."

"The RRAP has reinforced our commitment to continuous improvement and partnership," Respicio said. "Through this program, we are better equipped to strengthen our infrastructure, protect our supply chain, and ensure the long-term success of our maritime community."

"The findings and recommendations give us a strong foundation to further the Port's mission of supporting Guam's economy and building a sustainable, resilient supply chain for the region," Respicio added. "This process also allowed us to elevate our critical infrastructure priorities early on."

The event underscored the importance of proactive planning and strong partnerships in enhancing regional resilience. The Port Authority of Guam looks forward to working with its partners to implement the strategies and opportunities identified through the RRAP.

Port Employees Alert Customs to Potential Biosecurity Threat

The Port Authority of Guam's vigilance and rapid response protocols were instrumental in triggering a coordinated biosecurity effort following the discovery of potentially dangerous spiders aboard a vessel at the Jose D. Leon Guerrero Commercial Port on July 15.

"This incident underscores the Port's commitment to protecting Guam's borders," said Port General Manager Rory J. Respicio. "Thanks to our employees' swift action and our established protocols, we continue to play a vital role in safeguarding our island's biosecurity."

Officers with the Guam Customs and Quarantine Agency's (CQA) Biosecurity Task Force (BSTF) responded to the alert from Port personnel and initiated a physical inspection of the flat rack the spiders were discovered on, as well as the shipping vessel carrying it.

As a result, officers confirmed the presence of two kinds of live spiders – one species that appeared brown in color, and another that appeared to be a venomous black widow spider.

The officers collected specimens of the spiders, which were referred to Guam State Entomologist Christopher Rosario with the Guam Department of Agriculture (DOAG) and University of Guam Extension Entomologist and Assistant



Professor of Entomology Alfred Daniel Johnson, Ph.D.

Rosario confirmed one specimen to indeed be a black widow spider, while the other specimen was forwarded to Johnson, who determined it to be an Argiope or Neoscona juvenile spider of the Araneidae family.

"While the spiders were found on open flat racks, unlike fully enclosed shipping containers, flat racks give less protection against invasive species, which can contaminate other containers incoming and transshipping through Guam," said Rosario.

With concurrence from Rosario, BSTF officers successfully treated the areas where the spiders were found.

The vessel was cleared with no further action required.

One Port, One Fight: Stronger Together

By Rory J. Respicio and Charlie Hermosa



We started on opposite sides. One of us runs the Port. The other raised hard questions about port fees. We talked through the cost of doing business, the complexity of Port operations, and the balance between public responsibility and private impact. It turns out we agree on more than we expected.

Rory's Perspective:

Our focus since day one has been on maximizing all charges per the tariff, and we have been making good on this commitment. Fee enforcement is not new. Some recent discoveries, as I have disclosed, were long-overdue corrections that were validated, uncontested, and discussed with industry partners before implementation. We operate with financial discipline and fairness to all port users, confirmed by audits, improved finances, stronger bond ratings, and continued trust from our industry partners, local and federal.

Charlie's Perspective:

As a former port user and operator, I have seen both sides. Customers need to understand what they are being charged and why. That was my goal in raising these questions. I have always known Rory to have an open-door policy and his willingness to address these issues strategically will go a long way. The Port has developed a mission-driven approach and willingness to solve

problems in real time. Those qualities continue to make a huge difference.

One thing that stood out in our conversation was how the Port kept cargo moving during the pandemic. While other ports on the mainland faced serious backlogs, Guam avoided those outcomes. That level of coordination and foresight made a real difference for everyone in the supply chain, from carriers and customers to residents and businesses across the region. This will serve as the framework for future operations and why the Port of Guam serves as a strategic gateway when it comes to the transshipment of goods, both raw materials and finished products.

Some of the anxiety around recent fee enforcement stems from the sense that these are just higher costs without a clear path to hiring more workers. That naturally raises questions about whether vessel service standards will hold. The truth is, the Port has set a new standard, and no one wants to see that progress slip and this is why this open dialogue is very important. The Port is moving in the right direction, and this conversation is part of that shift.

What we see now is a Port that has been course correcting, closing gaps, and communicating more clearly with stakeholders.

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The effort to engage is real. What matters is that the process stays fair and responsive.

Rory's Perspective:

The Port works because of its people and its partnerships, including our workforce, management team, Board of Directors, the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Legislature, Guam's Congressman, our local and federal partners, and the military. We stay focused on our customers while remaining accountable to those who rely on the Port for the movement of goods, mission readiness, and economic stability. We are proud of the men and women who have kept cargo flowing across five decades through typhoons, a pandemic, and everyday challenges, too.

Every correction we have made was backed by data and due diligence. We are committed to getting it right even when critics and naysayers are quick to say otherwise. This Port is about resilience, sustainability, and strengthening Guam's role in regional security and national interest. That is something I will continue to follow, including through the upcoming PUC process.

The Port's mission is twofold. First, to serve the people and economy of Guam through reliable, cost-effective operations. Second, to support national security by remaining one of sixteen strategic American ports for joint military readiness in the Pacific. These two goals are not separate. They are connected. And both require a

Port that is stable, disciplined, and ready.

Charlie's Perspective:

The Port of Guam serves as a strategic port and is the lifeline of our island's economy. As the master plan continues to unfold, we need to ensure that the port's demand matches its capabilities. We need to ensure that we continue to drive efficiencies so that the Port also plays an integral part in lowering the price of goods. This has to be a collaborative effort across the board to include the support from the Department of Transportation primarily from the Maritime Administration. President Trump has been very clear on restoring America's Maritime Dominance.

Joint Closing:

We may come from different sides of the wharf, but we agree on this: Guam's Port has aging infrastructure and gantry cranes in need of immediate replacement. In addition, it must be allowed to operate like a business. Strong leadership and efficient management, rolled together with engaged industry partners and a dedicated workforce from across the public and private sectors, are what keep things moving and how trust and confidence are earned. Standing on facts, working through differences, and staying focused on real solutions makes progress matter more than posturing and keeps us mission ready, all day, every day.

Port Hosts U.S. Army SDDC Leadership for Office Call and Tour

The Port Authority of Guam welcomed senior leadership from the U.S. Army's Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) on July 28, 2025 for an official office call and port tour, reinforcing the Port's vital role in national defense and regional logistics.

The visiting delegation included Aviana Gutierrez, Deputy to the Commander of the 599th Transportation Brigade (Hawaii), along with Thomas James Marbury, Deputy to the Operations Officer, and Clayton Maciorowski, IT Specialist. Also joining were Major James J. Rojek, Executive Officer of the 835th Transportation Battalion (Okinawa), and Guam-based SDDC personnel.

During the office call, Port General Manager Rory J. Respicio provided a comprehensive briefing on the Port's operational progress and recent accomplishments. He highlighted the



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Port's fiscal turnaround, infrastructure upgrades, and initiatives to modernize its equipment fleet. A key focus of the discussion included the Port's efforts to secure federal funding for the acquisition of new gantry cranes to meet increasing cargo demand and enhance resiliency.

Following the meeting, the delegation toured the Jose D. Leon Guerrero Commercial Port to view firsthand the Port's facilities, operations, and strategic capabilities that support both civilian

commerce and military readiness across the Indo-Pacific region.

"This visit reflects the strong partnership between the Port and the U.S. military, and underscores our shared commitment to regional stability, economic growth, and national security," Respicio said.

The Port remains the Western Pacific's premier deep-water facility and Guam's critical lifeline for commerce and defense.

Port Participates in Governor's Summer Youth Employment Program



The Port Authority of Guam has once again partnered with the Department of Youth Affairs (DYA) for the 2025 Governor's Summer Youth Employment Program (GSYEP). This valuable initiative offered a unique opportunity for Guam's youth to gain real-world experience and explore potential career paths within the Government of Guam and the Port Authority of Guam.

The GSYEP is open to students aged 15 to 17 who are interested in working for the government. Participants had the chance to work at various government agencies, including the Port Authority, from June 9th through July 18th, 2025. Students were compensated at a rate of \$10 per hour while performing essential entry-level duties such as answering phones, providing customer

service, filing, and assisting with the cleaning and maintenance of buildings and facilities.

For many years, the Port Authority has been a dedicated participant in this program, recognizing the immense value of investing in our island's future workforce. By providing hands-on experience, we help build the foundational skills these young individuals will carry with them throughout their careers.

"We are committed to preparing Guam's youth for the future by offering them a first-hand look at public service," said Port Authority General Manager Rory J. Respicio. "Programs like GSYEP are crucial for building real-world skills and inspiring the next generation of leaders who will help shape our island's progress."



The Port Authority of Guam opened its doors to 33 enthusiastic students from the University of Guam's Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student Support Services (TRIO) Program on July 17, 2025, for a day of learning and exploration. The visit, designed to provide real-world insights into the logistics and operations of Guam's only commercial seaport, featured an informative presentation by the Planning Division followed by a tour led by the Operations Division.

During the presentation, students gained a comprehensive understanding of the Port Authority's mission and its critical role in Guam's economy. The Planning Division highlighted the agency's ambitious future plans for modernization and its strategic importance in the Indo-Pacific region, sparking interest in the dynamic career opportunities within the maritime and logistics fields.

The highlight of the day was the guided tour of the Port's facilities. Students witnessed firsthand the bustling operations of cargo being efficiently discharged and loaded onto the Papa Mau vessel in the terminal yard. The tour also

included an overview of various port properties, giving students a tangible sense of the scale and complexity of port operations.

The visiting students are participants in the TRIO Upward Bound Program, a summer initiative for qualified 9th through 12th-grade students who are motivated to pursue a college education. The program, which is 100% federally funded, provides a supportive environment where students can take high school academic courses, receive college and career preparation, and participate in enriching field trips, college tours, and social activities. As part of their commitment, students also earn a stipend for their active participation.

This educational outreach is part of the Port Authority's ongoing commitment to inspiring Guam's youth and fostering the next generation of professionals. By connecting classroom learning with real-world applications, the Port aims to encourage students to consider careers in fields vital to the island's future growth and connectivity.

The Port looks forward to continuing such partnerships to support educational excellence and opportunity across Guam.

Port's Wellness Program Continues



Planning: Seawall Walk



Procurement: Nutrition Supplementation



Terminal: Hypertension and Nutrition

The Port Authority of Guam continues its commitment to employee wellness through monthly division-led activities. In July, the Planning Division hosted a Seawall Walk on July 2 to promote physical activity. On July 10, an informative session on hypertension and healthy nutrition was held in collaboration with DPHSS's Mr. Al Silverio. Rounding out the month, Procurement and Supply partnered with Vitamin World Guam on July 23 to present on nutritional supplementation.

Final Farewell: Chief Benjamin Q. Bucao

With heavy hearts, the Port Authority of Guam bid a final farewell to our beloved brother, Benjamin Q. Bucao, former Port Police Chief.

On Wednesday, July 9, 2025, Port family, colleagues, and friends gathered in front of the Port Administration Building to honor his life, legacy, and service. Port Police personnel stood in solemn salute, a powerful gesture of respect and gratitude from one protector to another. His memory and impact will forever remain anchored in the hearts of those he served and protected. Rest in peace, Chief Bucao. May your legacy continue to guide and inspire those who follow in your footsteps.



July Photo Highlights



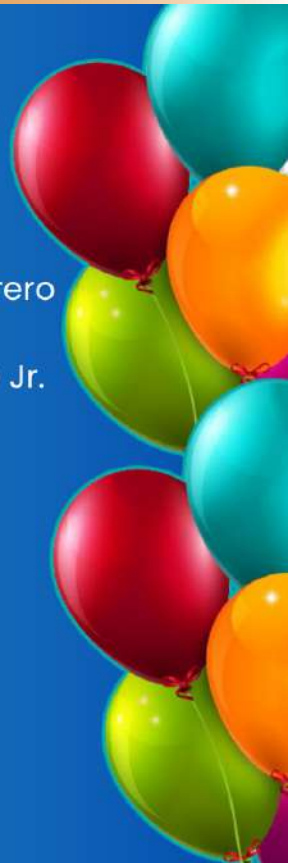
July Photo Highlights Continued



August Birthdays



Happy Birthday



Aaron N.G. Jamanila
Jaimie Ann Franquez
Ryan M. Duenas
Paul P. Francisco
Samantha Quinata
Maui C. Ogo
Jacob B. Aquiningoc II
Ellaine G. Santayana
Jerimiah D. Sablan
Mark C. Tolenoa
Cortnye M. Eclavea
Asuncion A. Nocon

Dominick V. Fernandez
Kevin R. Sanchez
Michael D. Taitano
Christopher J. Aguigui
Colby John L. Santos
Raymond I. San Nicolas
Kenneth S. Cruz II
Donna Lizama-Acosta
Wayne K. Dylon
Perry O. Blas
Keesha Ann F. Duenas
Evelyn G. Pangelinan

Jennifer Leon Guerrero
Frank V. Lujan
Robert F. Camacho Jr.
Jeffrey J. Quinata
Ranie F. Fausto
Lina M. Quinata
Edwin A. Malaga
Michael J. Taitano
Vester G. Lagaras
Victor Q. Duenas
Jose B. Guevara III