

I Linå'la-ta (OUR LIFE)



SiñA
Self-Advocates in Action

March 18, 2017 • Vol. 10, Issue 2

From Advocate to Self-Advocate

Estonian Lynn Tydingco



(L-R): Stephen Madarang and Andrew Tydingco attended the 2014 Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) Conference in Oklahoma City.

Advocate: a person or group who speaks out on behalf of others.

Self-Advocate: one who speaks out for oneself.

Stephen Anthony Unpingco Madarang learned first-hand what the definition of these two terms were. Stephen was an active young man with many interests. He was a break dancer, a disc jockey, an auto mechanic, a Harley Davidson enthusiast, a tailor, and a Chamorro Cultural Carver and entrepreneur with BuBu Designs.

Stephen grew up in Dededo, Guam next door to his best friend and Pare' (Godfather to his son Joseph), Andrew Tydingco. Given that Andrew is visually impaired, Stephen had an even deeper connection to Andrew by serving as Andrew's eyes. He guided, drove, and worked with Andrew as a club disc jockey and a Cable installer at Andrew's computer company.

Throughout the years, Stephen was involved and supported Andrew and the disability community.



Christine and Stephen Madarang display his carvings at their BuBu Designs Shop.

However, Stephen's health condition started to change. He had multiple health issues. He now knew how it was to be a Person with a Disability. His exposure and experience with the disability world helped him and his family with the acceptance and coping with his multiple disabilities.

Stephen was one of the founding members of SiñA: Self-Advocates in Action Guam, a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization of persons with disabilities and their families promoting self-advocacy and self-determination to achieve independence, integration, and full inclusion into society. He learned and practiced his self-advocacy and self-determination skills. He trained and became one of three self-advocacy facilitators, teaching and mentoring people with disabilities to become independent and contributing members of society. He was an active leader and served as a member-at-large on the SiñA Board of Directors for four years. Stephen, Christine, and Andrew designed the SiñA shirts. In addition, Stephen carved the SiñA neck pieces.

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From Advocate to Self-Advocate (cont. from page 1)

Stephen, Andrew, and Lynn were members of Team Guam that presented at the 2014 National SABE (Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered) Conference in Oklahoma City.

Stephen was taken from us too soon. On January 28, 2017, Self-Advocates in Action Guam had a tribute to Stephen and presented his wife, Christine with a Certificate of Appreciation for all his contributions to his peers and island.

Rest in Paradise, our dear Brother Stephen!



Team Guam at National SABE Conference in Oklahoma City. L to R: Monicaa Manalo (CNMI), Marie Libria (GDDC), Lynn Tydingco (SiñA Guam), Stephen Madarang (SiñA Guam), and Andrew Tydingco (SiñA Guam).



Lynn and Andrew lead SiñA's tribute and presentation of a Certificate of Appreciation to Christine Sablan Madarang and their son Jace.

Our FestPac Experience By Lisa Ogo and Roy Rosario

The moment we entered Chamorro Village, we could feel the excitement in the air. We had a wonderful time strolling through the booths and being able to see all the unique crafts and displays from the different islands.

We proceeded to watch some entertainment from the Marshall Islands. They opened up their show by teaching the audience how to say their greeting which is "yokwe," which means "hello" in the Marshallese language.

Although we were not able to see the dancing visually, we could feel the emotions and expressions through the sounds of their beautiful voices. It was an amazing experience to see the unity of how the Lord has brought the islands to join in as one.

In closing, our treasured moment was when our Auntie Bennette Lizama sang the Festpac 2016 theme song written by Peter Onedera. Powerful lyrics not to be forgotten: "what we own, what we have, what we share, United voices of the Pacific."

National Autism Awareness Month

By Lou Mesa

April 2017 is National Autism Awareness Month and the Autism Community Together (ACT) is planning several events to raise awareness of issues surrounding persons with autism, to promote autism acceptance and to showcase the abilities, talents and strengths of children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). ACT will hold its 10th Annual Autism Awareness Fair on Saturday, April 8, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM at the Agana Shopping Center. The annual fair also brings together several government agencies, service providers, non-profits and disability related organizations in an effort to inform the community regarding the resources, services, and programs available for people with disabilities and their families. This year's theme is "Embrace Our World". ACT will also be holding several other activities and invite the island community to join them in celebrating Autism Awareness Month in April.



Autism Community Together (ACT) Board of Directors: (starting from left) Mary Cruz; Lourdes Bascon Mendiola; Joseph Leon Guerrero, Vice-President; Ana Kilroy; Kristal Flores, Secretary; Josephine Blas, President; Denise Perez Rafael, Treasurer.



Autism Awareness Month/Fair Committee: (front row, from left) Denise Perez; Josephine Blas holding Joseph Blas; Lourdes Ann Mesa; Ligaya Magana; Ana Kilroy; and Tanya Duenas. (Back row, from left) Jose and Joseph Leon Guerrero. Other members of the committee are Monica Limtiaco, Dorianne Walker, Lourdes Bascon Mendiola, Vincent Duenas, Amy Canuso and Mary Cruz.

Akudi Program Helps Dream Become A Reality

By Christina Jung



Jason Lee Cruz, Akudi Loan client, received a check on March 2 from Bank of Guam and the Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT) Akudi Loan Program representatives after signing all closing documents to purchase an established Gym from current owner, Shivrani Daryanani. The meeting was held at the GSAT office located in the University of Guam, Dean's Circle House 19. (L-R) Shivrani Daryanani, iFit Guam Owner; Jason Lee Cruz, Akudi Loan client; Christopher Cruz, Bank of Guam Relationship Banking Manager; Christina Jung, Guam CEDDERS Research Associate/Akudi Loan Representative; Leah Abelon, GSAT Center Coordinator/Akudi Program Manager. Also present during the signing, but not pictured was Denise Mendiola Hertslet, Pacific Island Microcredit Institute (PIMI), Senior Business Advisor.

Jason Lee Cruz was diagnosed with a visual impairment and slight paralysis due to Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) in the early 1990s when he was in his 20's. A star athlete during his high school years, this development required an adjustment period.

However, it did not stop him from pursuing his dreams and achieving various goals he set for himself.

He began body building in 1998 and entered his first body building competition in 2001. Since then, he has participated annually, a total of 16 years and counting. He is widely known within our island community as a role model and was recognized as Guam's Most Inspirational Athlete of the Year.

It has always been Jason's dream to start his own gym

and someday be a motivational speaker. He achieved the second goal by conducting several speaking engagements for various groups over the years. His dream of gym ownership was achieved just earlier this month with the help of the Akudi Loan Program.

The Akudi Loan Program is a collaborative project administered by the University of Guam, Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (Guam CEDDERS), Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT) in collaboration with the Pacific Microcredit Institute (PIMI) and the Bank of Guam. Akudi offers low interest loans to qualified Guam residents with disabilities to purchase assistive technology devices. It also provides loans to individuals

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Akudi Program Helps Dream Become A Reality (cont. from page 4)

on Guam with disabilities who want to start their own business or expand on existing business and need funding for equipment, supplies, inventory, and other related services. This specialized type of funding provides individuals with disabilities alternative options and empowerment to promote independence and starting up their own businesses.

After completing the application process with guidance support from Denise Herslett, Executive Director of PIMI, and Leah Abelon, GSAT Project Coordinator, and undergoing a review by the Akudi Loan Review SubBoard, Mr. Cruz's loan application was approved. He received his check on March 2nd to purchase an already established gym, previously known as iFit Guam located in Tamuning.

Now called Universal Fitness, the new owner, Mr. Cruz, hopes to open a facility that is "user friendly for every person who would like to improve their quality of physical, mental and emotional as well as social health" to contribute to our island. He believes that this space will allow people to "live life in a more positive manner and feel better about who they are as a member of our island, society, community, family, youth, athlete, and member of Universal Fitness." With his history of overcoming barriers, he would also like to offer people with disabilities on Guam a space to "stimulate their minds and bodies for great health."

Congratulations, Jason Lee Cruz!

SiñA: Self-Advocates in Action Board Members Estonian Lynn Tydingco

SiñA: Self-Advocates in Action Guam, a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization of Persons with Disabilities and their families promoting Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination to achieve independence, integration, and full inclusion into society.

On January 28, 2017, SiñA held its 2017 Election for three Members-At-Large and Board Secretary at the Annual General Membership meeting at the Outrigger Resort and Spa.



(Standing L-R) President Andrew Tydingco and Member-At-Large Noel Lazaga. (Sitting L-R) Vice President Lynn Tydingco, Board Secretary Christine Sablan Madarang, Member-At-Large Lisa Ogo, Outgoing Member-At-Large Jessica Manglona, and Member-At-Large Roy Rosario.

GSAT Model Home Opens

By Leah Abelon

As we grow older, our demand for physical accommodations change. Many individuals, especially the aging population prefer to remain in their homes rather than being placed in nursing homes. In June 2015, the Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT) Demonstrations Center opened its doors to a more interactive showroom to showcase a Model Home specifically designed for this population and individuals with special needs to live independently in their own home. The layout displays appliances that are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other smart gadgets that can be activated at the touch of a button. Upon entering the living room, you can control the lighting from the Caseta Wireless Dimmer Switch by a mobile application called Lutron. Lighting controlled by the dimmer switches have varying intensity and can be used for safety and comfort. In the living room area, you will also find a mobility chair that helps you recline and stand with the aid of a couch cane. These two functions are controlled by a button that is attached to the chair, and makes it easy for an individual to be transferred from a wheelchair to the mobility chair. Adjacent is a side table with an amplification phone that announces a person calling and the numbers being dialed. This is ideal for individuals with visual impairments or hearing loss. A robotic vacuum cleaner, called the Roomba, helps perform cleaning functions that are nearly impossible for a person who has mobility challenges.

The kitchen area includes an ADA compliant refrigerator. The thermostat controls are below 54 inches, can be operable with one hand, and requires little force to activate. The appliance is positioned where the doors swing back fully at a 180 degree angle. Beside the refrigerator is a sink that provides ample space for

a person in a wheelchair to approach and use a lever design faucet. The electric range, on the left side of the sink, features front mounted controls that are within reach and eliminates the risk of burns. The ADA requires maximum high forward reach for controls and operating mechanisms to be within 48" maximum and low forward reach of 15."

Also featured in the model home is an adjustable bed that can be elevated, lowered, and includes a massage function. This can benefit individuals who are experiencing back pain, sciatica, or arthritis. Controlled by a wireless remote, the adjustable bed makes it easier to get into and out of bed. Near the bed is a powered Hoyer Lift that helps transport a person who is unable to walk into bed or in the bathroom. On the bedside table is an Alertmaster that alerts you of incoming calls, if someone is at the door, or if motion is detected. It comes with a bed shaker or can be customized to include accessory options, like a motion sensor, audio transmitter, and personal signalers. A low dresser is best for individuals who use wheelchairs for easy access. On top of the dresser is a hairdryer holder for individuals who have limited use of their arms and hands. The adjustable desk is also recommended for a person in a wheelchair as it provides ample knee space, with height and tilt adjustable features.

In this generation of advance technology, independent living is within reach through smart gadgets in assistive technology. Homes with smart appliances and furniture are becoming a trend internationally for convenience and easy living. Independence and safety can be achieved through a fully automated home. Before we know it, we will be living like the Jetsons.



Photos pictured above show GSAT Demo Center and Model Home Features. Requests for a demonstration can be made by calling GSAT staff at 735-2490 (v), 735 -2491 (v and TTY), or visit the GSAT website at www.gsateddors.org.

SiñA Participates at the AT Fair



Self Advocates in Action (SiñA) participated in the Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT) Annual Assistive Technology Fair by having a display table with members assisting in sharing information about the organization. Shown during the Fair (Left-Right) are: Andrew Tydingco, SiñA President; Sherry Guerrero, Guam CEDDERS Media Specialist; Lynn Tydingco, Vice President; and Leah Abelon, Guam CEDDERS/GSAT Center Coordinator and facilitator of the AT Fair.

Nothing About Us Without Us.

Be part of the solution.

Join

SiñA
Self-Advocates in Action

(671) 929-9990
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Upcoming Events

MAR-APR

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Mar 16 Parents' Rights and Responsibilities In Special Education (PRISE) IEP Training, 5:00pm-8:00pm, iCan Training Center New Orleans Pacific Plaza across Tamuning Infusion

Mar 21 Down Syndrome Association of Guam – Trisomy 21 Day

Mar 23 Parents' Rights and Responsibilities In Special Education (PRISE) IEP Training, 5:00pm-8:00pm, iCan Training Center New Orleans Pacific Plaza across Tamuning Infusion

Mar 30 Parents' Rights and Responsibilities In Special Education (PRISE) IEP Training, 5:00pm-8:00pm, iCan Training Center New Orleans Pacific Plaza across Tamuning Infusion

TBA Autism Awareness Month Proclamation Signing, Governor's Large Cabinet Room, Adelup

Apr 1 Bank of Guam Lights It Up Blue (LIUB), 6:00pm, Bank of Guam Headquarters in Hagatna

Apr 2 World Autism Awareness Day Mass of Thanksgiving & Merienda Pledge to Wear Blue, 11:00am, San Juan Bautista Church, Ordot

Apr 2 Guam National Guard Lights It Up Blue (LIUB), Guam National Guard Readiness Center, Barrigada

Apr 3-7 Photo Voice Exhibit: Caregivers of Autism, Bank Hours, Bank of Guam Main Branch in Hagatna

Apr 5 Pledge to Wear Blue, All Bank of Guam Branches

Apr 8 10th Annual Autism Awareness Fair Pledge to Wear Blue, 10:00am-2:00pm, Agana Shopping Center

Apr 15 Hunter Speaks 5K Run, Walk, Wheel

Apr 22 Autism Community Together (ACT) General Membership Meeting, 10:00am-12:00pm, Coast360 Federal Credit Union Community Room, Maite

Apr 29 Family Fun Day

SiñA
Self-Advocates in Action

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New Possibilities

- *Low interest loans*
- *Flexible payments*
- *Cash to purchase:*
 - *Assistive technology devices and services*
 - *Home modifications*
 - *Equipment, inventory, and supplies for your business*



AKUDI
WE EXIST TO ASSIST



Guam System for Assistive Technology (GSAT) at 735-2490/1
To obtain an application visit: www.gsatcedders.org.

Note: The Assistive Technology Loan Programs were rebranded in April 2016
and are now referred to as "The Akudi Loan Program"