

# Trades Academy WINNERS

## Apprenticeship GUAM extends deadline for businesses

JOSIE MOYER  
FOR TRADES

**T**he Guam Department of Labor is now accepting applications from businesses interested in receiving funding to train new apprentices.

The funding was secured through an ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant that was announced in June 2016. According to Guam DOL Special Projects Coordinator Lina Hammond, Guam submitted an application and was one of 37 states/territories that was funded. Guam was awarded \$800,000, of which \$700,000 is allotted for apprenticeship training instruction and support services throughout the island.

"This funding is to help eligible Guam businesses effectively train and retain 100 new apprentices. This seed money is strictly for the first year of related training costs for identified in-demand occupations in Allied Health, Construction, Hospitality, and Telecommunications," said Hammond.

This is the first time Guam has been awarded the ApprenticeshipUSA State Expansion Grant, according to Hammond. "It is anticipated that the funding will be allocated for up to three years, depending on the U.S. Senate. Grantees will not have to apply for the second and third years; funding is dependent on the success of the first year," said Hammond.

Occupations that qualify to receive funding under the ApprenticeshipGuam Expansion Grant include: certified nursing assistants, medical assistants, carpenters, construction craft laborers, electricians, hospitality facilities maintenance, hotel associates, network and computer system administrators, computer systems analysts and telecommunications technicians.

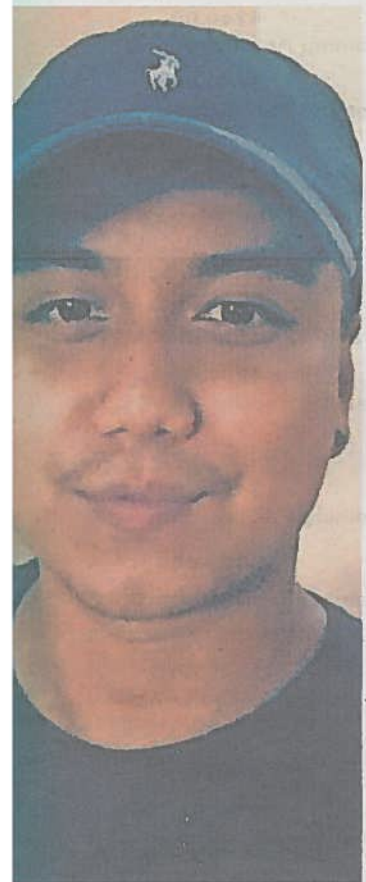
James Martinez, Guam Contractors Association President, says the grant will provide additional funding for Guam's Registered Apprenticeship Program, which has been exclusively funded through H-2B visa program fees. In light of the increase in denials of H-2B visas, the program's revenue source is "nearly, if not all depleted."

"Anytime we receive federal grants that would improve our economy or assist in developing our infrastructure and human resource development, it is a good thing," said Martinez. "This Guam Expansion Grant will open up more opportunities for financial assistance to those wanting industry credentials to position themselves for higher-paying careers in the trades."

There are about 5,500 people employed in the local construction industry, representing 9.6 percent of the total workforce in Guam.

The deadline for businesses to apply for funding has been extended to May 31. The funding and training period is for one year, from June 1 through May 31, 2018. All training must be completed by June 30, 2018.

The ApprenticeshipGuam Expansion Grant application and program guidelines are available online at <http://dol.guam.gov/employment-and-training/apprenticeship/>.



**James Valencia**  
GCA Scholarship Recipient  
HVAC



**Joshua Pelobello**  
Rotary Scholarship Recipient  
Electrical



**Fedelez "Felix" Antolin**  
Rotary Scholarship Recipient  
HVAC

ing classes at the Trades Academy knowing what to expect, but with support of his parents, wife and friends, he felt confident enough to go into the Trades office and apply for the courses. "I have since learned that trade is something that will secure a future for me and my family," says Valencia.

With an amazing instructor like Pabroa, I know I will become a successful journeyman when I complete the courses," says Ongesii.

After he heard he was one of the selected few to receive a scholarship, Ongesii was overwhelmed with excitement. "The scholarship really took a lot off my shoulders and I'm grateful for this opportunity."

### James Valencia

James Valencia is an ambitious young man. At age 23, he's finishing up a bachelor's degree in Business at the University of Guam

while attending classes at the GCA Trades Academy. Valencia is also employed as an HVAC and electrical helper for The Light. The company is a family-owned business run by his father. "I plan on helping my father expand the business and eventually take over," says Valencia.

Valencia came to the GCA Trades Academy inquiring about scholarships and at the time, they were available and he was able to receive one.

### Joshua Pelobello

Joshua Pelobello applied for the scholarship to provide a means for him to take electrical courses. "I want to continue to enhance my knowledge in electrical," says Pelobello and adds, "My grandfather taught me the basics as I assisted him in electrical work... while he was still here with us, may he continue to rest in peace."

Pelobello wants to use this scholar-

ship opportunity to fulfill his plans of becoming a certified electrician. He also would like to thank those providing the scholarships. "Thank you Rotary Club of Guam, GCA Trades Academy and Guam Contractors Association for this opportunity!"

### Fedelez "Felix" Antolin

Felix Antolin, married for 27 years with four children, worked for the same company for 20 years. He decided to make a change and seek new opportunities and skills. Besides a new job, he also began HVAC classes at GCA Trades Academy and looks forward to completing them.

"Taking the HVAC classes is beneficial to me because it'll help me learn proper understanding in the HVAC trade. I hope to obtain proper training, new skills and national certifications, but most of all a sense of accomplishment," says Antolin.