

# GEDA: Companies should apply for H-2B visas; makes education community contributions

Anumita Kaur, Pacific Daily News Published 10:53 p.m. ChT Aug. 22, 2019



The entrance to the Guam Economic Development Authority, photographed on Mar. 1, 2011. (Photo: PDN file)

The Guam Economic Development Authority board approved two education-related community contributions, and discussed encouraging companies to apply for H-2B visas despite the recent bans, during a meeting Thursday afternoon.

The board approved a \$30,000 contribution toward [Junior Achievement Guam \(https://ja-guam.org/\)](https://ja-guam.org/), a nonprofit for students' workforce readiness. The contribution will support the group's regional conference, which they are hosting this year.

The board also approved \$5,000 toward University of Guam's Startup Weekend Micronesia program, which involves masters students in business traveling throughout the Federated States of Micronesia, and producing and pitching a complete business plan for judgment.

The agency's community contribution funds come from tax break qualifying certificates it issues to some businesses. The certificates require the businesses to make cash contributions to the agency, which it earmarks for community purposes.

Both contributions approved Thursday are funded by the Guam Regional Medical City's qualifying certificate. GRMC is required under its certificate to pay GEDA \$1.2 million this year.

## H-2B issue

The board hopes to encourage companies to apply for H-2B visas beyond base projects, as approvals, [such as H-2B visas for Tsubaki Tower's construction \(/story/money/2018/11/14/tsubaki-tower-receives-approval-h-2-b-workers/1993965002/\)](https://www.guampdn.com/story/money/2018/11/14/tsubaki-tower-receives-approval-h-2-b-workers/1993965002/), are possible, according to board chairman David John.

"We haven't been getting denied, we just have no one applying," John said.

Applying does come with a steep cost for contractors, rounding up to nearly \$6,000 per person, according to board discussion. This prohibits companies from even applying, fearing the lost investment if United States Citizenship and Immigration Services rejects the bid.

However, pushing the ban and encouraging companies to apply may be necessary, board members said.

"You can't find anyone to build you single-family homes anymore," said board member George Chiu.

**More:** [Sustainability as opportunity: Businesses discuss local production and how to reduce waste \(/story/money/2019/08/13/businesses-discuss-sustainable-production-and-how-reduce-waste/1993522001/\)](https://www.guampdn.com/story/money/2019/08/13/businesses-discuss-sustainable-production-and-how-reduce-waste/1993522001/)

**More:** [AirAsia Philippines files petition to launch flight service to Guam \(/story/money/2019/08/21/airasia-philippines-petition-launch-flight-service-guam/2080112001/\)](https://www.guampdn.com/story/money/2019/08/21/airasia-philippines-petition-launch-flight-service-guam/2080112001/)

Read or Share this story: <https://www.guampdn.com/story/money/2019/08/22/geda-companies-should-apply-h-2-b-makes-education-contributions/2069709001/>