



CAROLINIAN AFFAIRS OFFICE

"Bawulasiyool Refaluwaseh"
2025



CITIZEN CENTRIC REPORT

OVERVIEW

Pursuant to Article III, Section 18 of the CNMI Constitution, the Carolinian Affairs Office (CAO) shall:

- Advise the governor on matters affecting persons of Carolinian descent within the Commonwealth.
- Review the application of government policies and the availability and quality of government services for persons of Carolinian descent.
- Investigate complaints and conduct public hearings regarding matters affecting persons of Carolinian descent.
- May recommend items for inclusion in the proposed annual budget, review the budget before its submission by the governor to the legislature and recommend amendments to the budget relating to matters affecting persons of Carolinian descent.
- May at any time require information in writing or otherwise with respect to matters affecting persons of Carolinian descent from the officers of any administrative department, office or agency of the Commonwealth.

CAO is represented as a member of the Governor's Council created under Article VI, Section 5 of the CNMI Constitution.

DIVISIONS

CAO has three (3) **Divisions**:

- 1) Executive & Administrative:** Oversees the overall management, planning, and coordination of departmental operations. This division ensures effective governance, policy implementation, and administrative support to achieve organizational goals.
- 2) Outreach Programs & Services:** Leads community engagement and program initiatives aimed at promoting awareness, education, and participation. This division delivers public services and fosters partnerships that advance the organizations mission.
- 3) Maintenance & Field Operation:** Responsible for the upkeep, repair, and efficient functioning of facilities, equipment, and field assets. This division ensures safe, reliable, and sustainable operations across all service areas.

MISSION

The Carolinian Affairs Office dedicates itself to providing steadfast public service aimed to protect, promote, and preserve the welfare and culture of the Carolinians here in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. It's utmost priority is the continued service of the community it was constitutionally established to serve and protect.



MEASURING PROGRESS

PARTNERSHIPS

Interagency collaboration has indeed proven to be a vital aspect of our success. This past year we have worked alongside numerous agencies in a coordinated development and implementation of the 2025 Cultural Heritage Month Celebration. This was made possible through the combined efforts with Indigenous Affairs Office, Youth Affairs Office, Women Affairs Office, and the nonprofit NGOs, such as the Carolinian Advisory Council (CAC), United Carolinian Association (UCA), Refaluwasch for Good Governance (RGG), and Canoe Federation.

CAROLINIAN BILINGUAL

The Public School System (PSS) is experiencing a positive shift with the increase of Carolinian bilingual teachers. This change is not merely an addition to the public school but signifies a deeper recognition of the Carolinian language's pivotal role, not only in public education, but to the entire community. With nine (9) dedicated teachers currently employed, and an additional eight (8) FTE's were hired as a result of our effort working with the school system.

Through our recommendation, combined with a strong Community Advocates, a major and significant progress was accomplished, which resulted in separation of Carolinian and Chamorro bilingual program with respective Manager at the helm. The change allows each program to set goals and objective based on specific needs, which more conducive and responsive to frontline teachers in a school setting. Although some challenges still remain, we are optimistic in ensuring the Carolinian language continues to thrive in perpetuity.



HERITAGE MONTH CULTURAL OUTREACH

The celebration of Chamorro Carolinian Cultural Heritage Month was a success! Our firm and unwavering commitment to promote, preserve, and perpetuate the Chamorro and Carolinian cultures is reflected through all the cultural activities throughout the month of September.

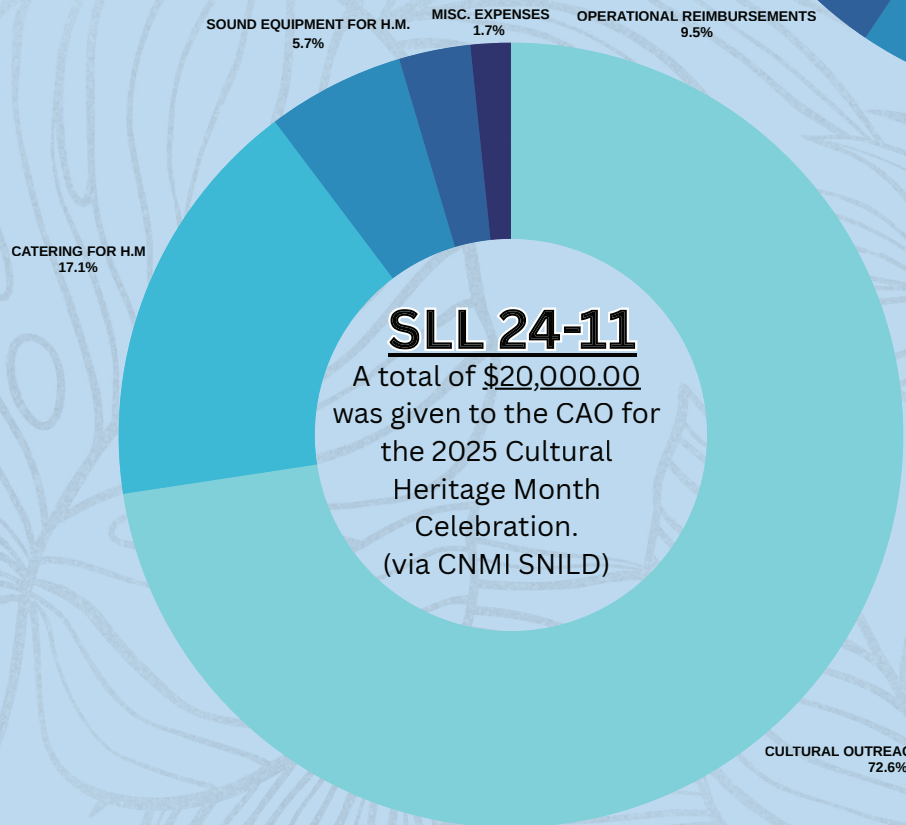
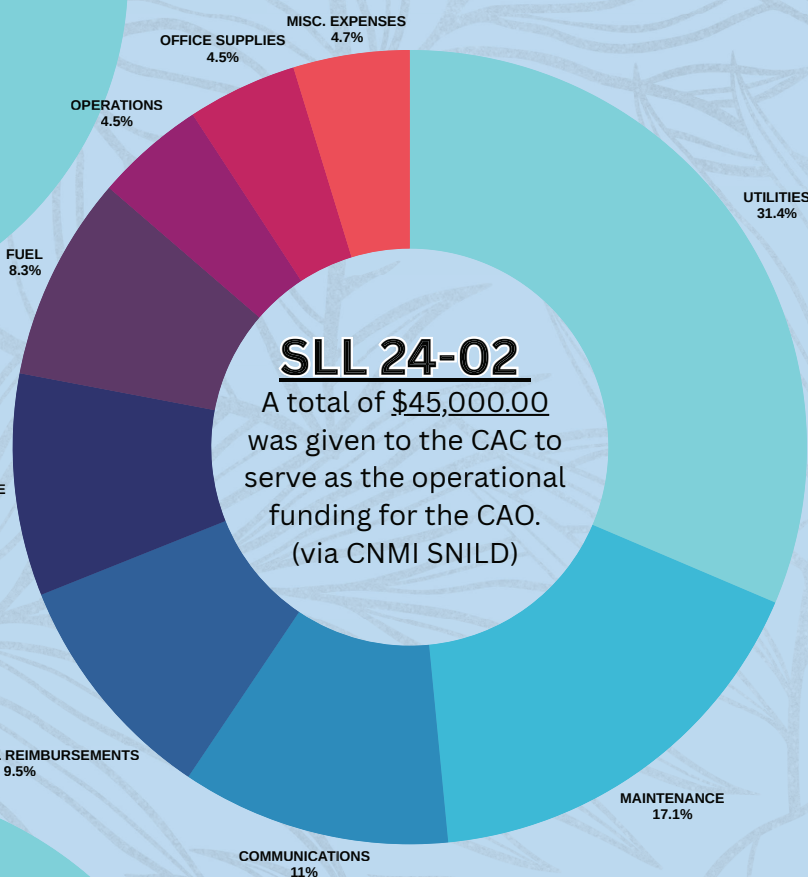
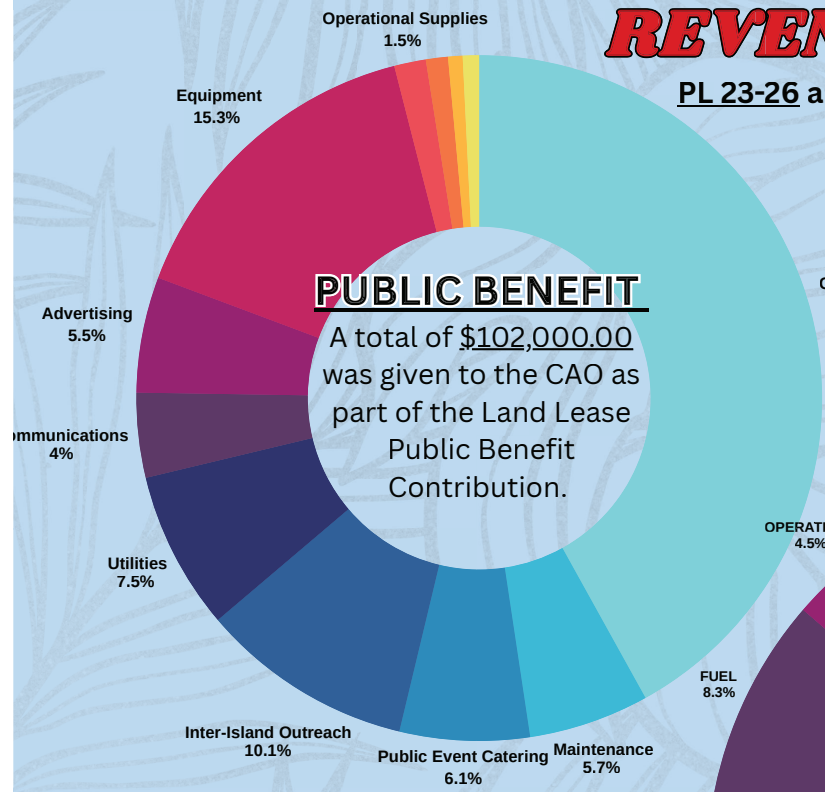
Cultural Outreach played a huge role at Heritage Month as well. The impact of bringing these cultural experiences directly into the classroom cannot be overstated. Students are always actively participating and engaged. Showcasing traditional dances, music, bead making, mwaar making, banana painting and weaving are some of the activities that were available throughout Heritage Month.



REVENUES & EXPENSES

PL 23-26 allocated funds for the Carolinian Affairs Office totaling \$204,566.00.

PERSONNEL	\$202,060
OPERATIONS	\$2,506



FUNDING	EXPENSES
\$102,000.00	\$57,673.79
\$45,000.00	\$33,558.41
\$20,000.00	\$13,920.17
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$105,152.37

WHAT'S NEXT?



GOAL 1

With adequate funding, we will implement a year-round cultural programs throughout the school system. This approach not only enriches the curriculum but also promotes critical thinking and empathy among students. It's a step towards creating a more culturally oriented perspective and perpetuate of local traditions and instill a sense of pride of who we are as a people.

GOAL 2

Continue efforts with PSS addressing teacher disparity to ensure fairness and equality pertaining to bilingual program; mitigating bilingual teacher shortages and improve working conditions and benefits. Given the significant disparity of teacher-student ratio, we will continue our efforts in closing the gap in collaboration with the School system.

GOAL 3

Lobby the passage of proposal to charge fees for facility usage and promulgate rules and regulations prior to implementation. Specifically, to charge nominal fee to supplement operational cost such as wear-and-tear on equipment, facility improvements, fuel & lubrication, and other cost to enhance the effective and efficient delivery of services.

GOAL 4

Work closely with legislature in support and enactment of a statute that mandates both Chamorro and Carolinian bilingual programs be implemented on all students from K through 8th grade. It's been proven that students are more susceptible in acquiring their native language at an early stage in life.

GOAL 5

Continued collaboration with PSS on certification efforts of Bilingual Teachers. In compliance with Board requirements, a Teacher must undergo certain courses prescribed by the Board for certification. The CAO is dedicated to supporting any efforts that will ensure that progress is made in getting all Bilingual Teachers certified and able to work towards a more unified and robust curriculum.

GOAL 6

Complete the installation of facilities along the beachfront at the CAO grounds, aligning with regulations and engaging with the community to ensure the project's success and sustainability. Continued search and identifying funding source to built Palapalas along the beach for the enjoyment of all our people.