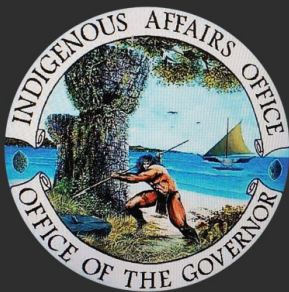


2025



INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS OFFICE



Financial Highlights:
FY: 2024 - 2025 Centric Report
provides a summary of the IAO
financial reports, including key
financial metrics of funds,
community outreach projects,
achievements, and challenges.

670-664-4263

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Indigenous Affairs Office plans and executes **programs** aimed to **promote, practice, preserve,** and **perpetuate** the **Chamorro Language and Culture of the Northern Mariana Islands.**

OBJECTIVES:

The Indigenous Affairs Office (IAO)

Established in June 1985 during the 2nd Constitutional Convention, Article III, Section 23 of the CNMI Constitution designates the Resident Executive with the following roles and responsibilities:

- Coordinate the development, distribution, adoption, and translation of a comprehensive history of the Marianas.
- Ensure local participation in executive managerial decision-making within both government and private sectors.
- Assist and promote the growth of local entrepreneurship.
- Establish a community foundation dedicated to advancing the rights and welfare of indigenous people.
- Coordinate the translation and dissemination of key documents, including the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Covenant, along with their analyses.
- Plan for the creation of the Indigenous Cultural Center and the Indigenous Hall of Fame.
- Coordinate an annual cultural festival to celebrate local heritage.
- Develop and implement a long-term strategy to support the entry of indigenous individuals into professional and technical higher education institutions.
- Serve as an advocate for the positions and concerns of indigenous people on various issues presented to them.

VISION:

To **protect** the **Chamorro language** and our **cultural heritage**, we aim to **enable** our children, visitors, and **community members** to **speak and engage** with our traditions.

Man Ma Bisita I Naftan Siha Tour
Leo Pangelinan Guide



PROGRAMS:



Spiritual Chamorro Healer, Sinot Donald Mendiola, at one of our ancestral burial sites.

The Indigenous Affairs Office has implemented 140 projects and introduced three new initiatives this year, all aimed at celebrating and promoting Chamorro Heritage and Language. This effort has been made possible through collaborations with government agencies, non-profit organizations, and Autonomous Agencies.

- **Man Ma Bisita I Naftan-Niha** - A journey to reconnect with our ancestors, honoring their legacy and recognizing their role in helping us thrive in today's community.



Naftan giya Anaguan



Students Touring the NMI Museum



500 Sails Presentation about the Programs

- **Supporting Cultural Sites and Museums- The 2nd Annual Cultural Road Map** was implemented during the Cultural Heritage Month at the NMI Museum and American Memorial Park Museum.

- Honoring traditions
- Sharing stories
- Reflecting on collective experiences
- These initiatives strengthen community connections, educate participants about history, and foster appreciation for Chamorro and Carolinian heritage.



NMI Museum 2nd Annual Cultural Heritage Road Map

- **The Cultural Immersion Summer Youth Camp** fosters curiosity, empathy, and collaboration among young people from diverse backgrounds, engaging them in practical experiences in farming, water management, and traditional knowledge through Chamorro and Carolinian Languages



Cultural Immersion Summer Youth Camp with Sponsors and Participants 8/1/2025



Vicente Aldan conducts Talaya Classes at the Summer Cultural Immersion Youth Camp July 7, 2025 – August 1, 2025.

The Indigenous Affairs Office under Article III Section 23: Assist and promote the growth of local entrepreneurship.

For 2025 we have 2 groups that we are currently assisting.

- Irensian Y Saina Yan I Tano, Inc. by Lawrence Fleming
- Linala Initiative, by Rowina Ogo

Challenges:

- **Funding Limitations**
 - Projects are on hold due to inadequate funding. Awaiting approval of IAO Proposals.
 - Ancient Burial Sites
 - Lost Souls
 - Hall of Fame for our Indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian Peoples
- **Office Completion Pending**
 - Pending expansion of the Medicinal Garden at the Main Office
- **Staffing Concerns**
 - There is a lack of personnel available to carry out community projects.
 - Partnership with DCCA Arts Council, HPO, DOA, OYA, DYS, NMI Museum, CAO, WAO, JKPL, and other non-profits with IAO Projects
 - Requesting FTE for the island of Tinian and Rota
 - Building partnerships among agencies to fulfill duties and responsibilities
 - maintenance of latte sites with DOC

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS OFFICE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Honorable, David M. Apatang
GOVERNOR



Honorable, Dennis C. Mendiola
LT. GOVERNOR



Luella I. Marciano
RESIDENT EXECUTIVE



Melani T. Wennio
PROGRAM MANAGER



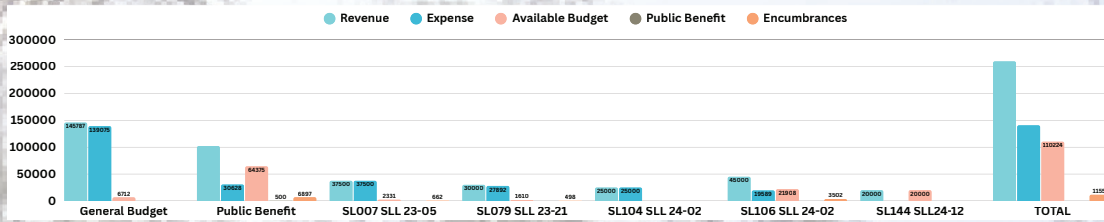
Blanche K. Chlarson
IAO REPRESENTATIVE



Edward I. Blas, Jr.
CULTURAL SPECIALIST

Seasonal Cultural Practitioners

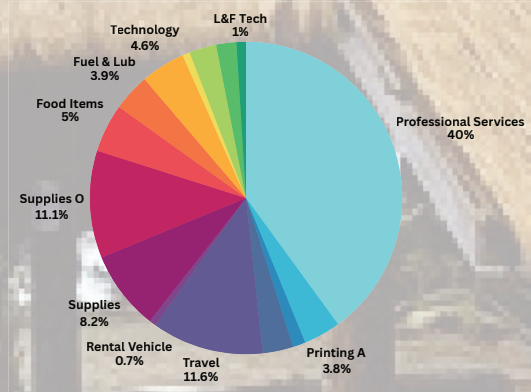
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS



ACCOUNTS	AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	BALANCE
General Funds	\$145,787 Wages & Salaries	\$6,711.57
Public Benefit	\$100,000 from DPL	\$41,475.00
PB Obligation LA22-004S	\$500.00 Smart Start delivered on July 31, 2025	Deposit into PB Account
SL104 SLL 24-02	\$25,000 for 38th AG Fair (Postponed to May)	\$25,000.00
SL106 SLL 24-02	\$45,000 for Indigenous Affairs Office	\$23,092.00
SL144 SLL 24-12	\$20,000 for IAO Cultural Heritage	\$20,000.00

- The Indigenous Affairs Office is made up of four staff members: a Resident Executive, a Program Manager, an IAO Representative, and a Cultural Outreach Specialist.
- To enhance outreach efforts, the Indigenous Affairs Office engages Seasonal Cultural Practitioners to present our traditional Chamorro knowledge at community events and Indigenous Affairs Projects.
- SLL 24-02 has allocated \$25,000.00 to assist the Department of Agriculture in organizing the 38th Saipan Agricultural Fair. However, due to unfavorable weather conditions, the event has been postponed until May 2026. The funds have been successfully transferred and deposited into SAFA, a non-profit organization that supports the DOA in its annual Agricultural Celebration. Additionally, \$10,000.00 was transferred from Grants and Management, as approved by the late Governor, Arnold I. Palacios.

OBJECT	DESCRIPTION	EXPENSE
Professional Services	Cultural Practitioners /Sponsorship	\$43,613
Printing A	Business cards, banners and stickers	\$4,189
Travel	Inter-Island Travel/Sponsor	\$12,614
Rental	Vehicle	\$780
Rental Others	Portable Potty/Tents/Sound System	\$3,451
Supplies	Office Supplies	\$8,957
Supplies O	Outreach	\$12,124
Food Items	Catering	\$5,456
Fuel & Lube	Gas	\$4,207
Technology	Laptops	\$5,016
Utilities	Sewer & water	\$836
Repair	Vehicle Maintenance	\$3,079
Communications	Landline, Wifi and Cell Phone	\$2,279
L & F Tech	Talayas	\$1,050
Public Audit		\$1,437
	TOTAL	\$109,088



- Most of the funds were allocated to Professional Services and project supplies.
- Contributions were made to Non-Profit Organizations that advocate, preserve, and celebrate our Chamorro cultures during both community and off-island events.
- Travel expenses supported our Staff Training Workshop held on the island of Guam, as well as interisland trips to bolster activities that promote Chamorro heritage.