

August 2021



FAPAC-DOI Newsletter



In this issue

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POLL: What was your favorite event in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics?
Respond [here](#) and stay tuned for results in our next newsletter!

From the president

Dear Chapter Members,

I hope you are all doing well and enjoying the last weeks of your summers. In July and August, I spent a lot of time watching the Tokyo 2020 summer Olympics - staying up late and getting up too early to watch events live - I am always awed by the dedication of all who make what seems impossible possible.

And here we are at the end of August, a month I love, as it has a nice end-of-summer feel. I recently spent a week recharging and adventuring on the east side of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California, enjoying some very wild and grand public lands; however, the wildfires have become an all too regular part of the landscape, and the smoke and haze were constant and sobering.

I hope you are enjoying these last days of summer and staying safe and well. Please continue to share your favorite adventures or staycations with us!

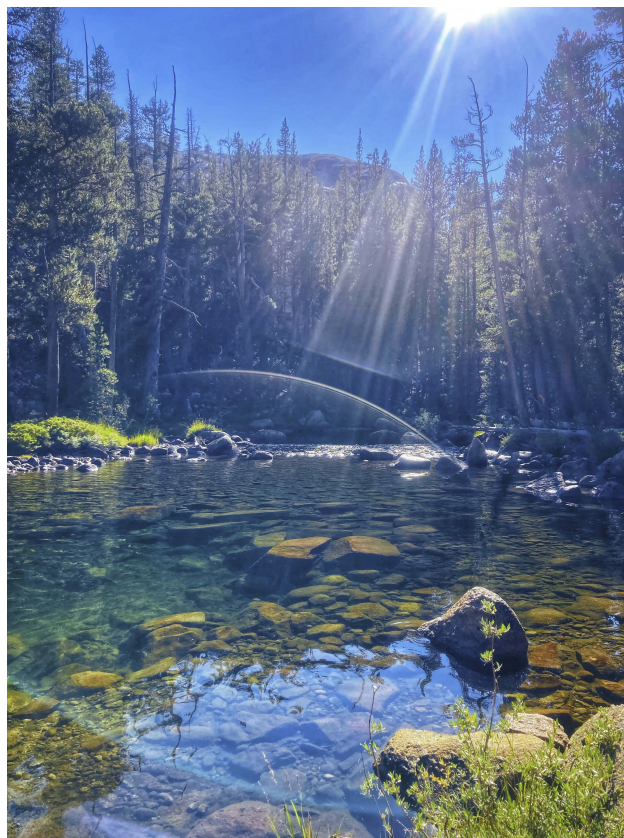
Stay well,



Lena Chang
President, FAPAC-DOI



Pine Creek Canyon near Bishop, California
Photo by Lena Chang



Lyell Fork of the Tuolumne River
Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite National Park, California
Photo by Lena Chang

Member spotlight

Leilani Takano

Assistant Field Supervisor

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office

Hafa Adai and Aloha, I was born and raised on Guam but spent a few years as a child living on Oahu. My father is of Filipino and Chinese descent, and my mother is of Filipino and Spanish descent. My father was adopted in the Philippines during World War II by a family from Texas, though he spent the majority of his youth in Okinawa. My mother emigrated from the Philippines to Texas in the early 1970s. Both my parents became business owners, which resulted in me gaining an impressive knowledge of jewelry and proficiency in conversational Japanese, although as time passes they have become dwindling skills!



Guam is a very small island, 30 miles long and 1 to 8 miles wide, located at the western edge of the Pacific Ocean. I grew up with the island culture that stressed the importance of family and community that consisted of many “aunts”, “uncles”, and “cousins” who were not related but like family, a deep respect for elders, and village fiestas which always had an abundance of food. I left Guam when I was 18, and after completing my undergraduate degree, I joined the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) through the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). This allowed me to complete an M.S. in Wildlife Science from Oregon State University while working with the USFWS Migratory Birds & Habitat Program and Ecological Services, Pacific Region in Oregon, which provided me with invaluable experience.

With FWS, I have been fortunate to work in several offices on a myriad of conservation issues with the goal of recovering threatened and endangered animals and plants in Oregon, southern Nevada, Hawaii, Guam, and California. My favorite part of my job continues to be working with passionate and talented colleagues, whom I learn from and make strides in conservation with. An equally favorite part of my job are reminders about the beauty of nature, from hikes in limestone forests to survey for rare butterflies and orchids, collecting data on burrowing owls as the sun sets in the Mojave Desert, and watching condors soar in the bright blue sky at Pinnacles National Park.



Currently, I am a supervisory biologist at the Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office in California. We have approximately 100 federally listed species within our office’s geographic jurisdiction that we work with our partners to recover.

Thank you for the opportunity to share a little about myself. I also thank FAPAC members and its board members for their support and the listening and sharing of thoughts during our meetings, especially considering the events of the past year.

I am an introvert

Barbara Green

Equal Opportunity Manager
National Park Service, Alaska Regional Office

When you look at me, you don't see me if you
Think I am standoffish, aloof and uncaring.
And although you may speak freely
Does not mean I am inclined to sharing.

I would rather listen to you than
Listen to me and I don't care to chatter.
Yet, regardless of how I appear to others
It doesn't mean you and they don't matter.

I often stand in the back of a room and
Observe those around me interacting.
The animated banter and the lively
Groups huddled together laughing.

And I still remain in the back of the room
Watching with ruminative amusement.
When I do finally choose to mingle
I do so with considerable discernment.

A one-on-one dialogue is more appealing
Than being surrounded by a crowd.
I prefer the quiet setting of a library
Versus a party, which can be quite loud.

Although I have the ability to engage
With diverse groups and conduct briefings.
It is not my preference to be a public
Speaker and attend a myriad of meetings.

Please don't mistake my quiet demeanor
To speculate I am shy or conceited.
I am simply an introvert, embracing solitude
And recharging when I feel depleted.

I am not popular and don't have a lot of friends
And will never be the center of attention.
That is perfectly fine with me since I want to be
Unnoticed, yet with a good intention.

I appreciate the personality traits of an extrovert
And admire their gregarious charm and wit.
Our differences enhance the world we live in
And for me, my introversion is a good fit.

When you look at me, and truly see me
You will see silence doesn't equal apathy.
I simply prefer the beauty of solitude,
And will welcome you in when I am ready.



*One of my favorite moments of solitude: laying on the beach and
appreciating the beauty of a palm tree and the sky.
Photo taken in Hawaii.*

Coral reef management

The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) has long supported the protection and management of coral reefs in the insular areas. Every year, OIA provides discretionary funding under the Coral Reef and Natural Resources Initiative to this end. OIA has also supported the [Coral Reef Management Fellowship program](#) since 2015 which makes participation in the program possible for the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.



Interior also serves as a co-chair of the [U.S. Coral Reef Task Force](#) which meets annually to protect coral reef and natural resources and works closely with the Office of Insular Affairs and the Ocean program at Interior.

Motusaga and Valentine Vaeoso, sisters who work with the Coral Reef Advisory Group in American Samoa, are former and current Coral Reef Fellows respectively. Motusaga works as a Project Lead and is currently leading research efforts related to the Valonia bubble algae that is smothering reefs in the territory. Valentine, as a current Coral Fellow, is focused on coral reef restoration pilot studies and is involved in important collaboration efforts with leadership and communities in the local villages.

The Vaeoso sisters support each other in their work as they bring their skills, energy, and creativity to work for the Coral Reef Advisory Group and for the local community. They share their efforts in this [OIA Conversation](#) available both on the [OIA YouTube Channel](#) and on podcasts everywhere under [There's More to Islands...](#)

For more information about Interior's Office of Insular Affairs visit <https://www.doi.gov/oia>. You can also find OIA on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

By Tanya Harris Joshua, Deputy Policy Director and Communications Lead, Office of Insular Affairs.



All pictures are shared courtesy of Motusaga and Valentine Vaeoso or the Coral Reef Advisory Group of American Samoa.

Summer story

Narrissa Brown

Fish and Wildlife Biologist

Pacific Islands Fish and Wildlife Office



Prominently perched atop a hill in Kawaihae on the Island of Hawaii is [Pu'ukoholā Heiau](#), a temple built by Hawai'i's first king. The name Pu'ukoholā means "hill of the whale" and looks out over the Kohala-Kona coast and Pacific Ocean. The heiau was constructed in 1790 by dry stacking rocks originating from far away. In fact, each rock was passed from person to person in a human chain that stretched for more than 20 miles to Pololū Valley. If even a single rock was dropped, it was considered unworthy for use in building the heiau and was returned to its place of origin. This luakini heiau (sacrificial temple) was dedicated to the Hawaiian war God Kū. One of Kamehameha's religious advisors prophesized that the construction of Pu'ukoholā would lead to the unification of the Hawaiian Islands under a single ruler. This was realized in 1810 when King Kamehameha I unified the islands as its first monarch. Below Pu'ukoholā heiau is Pelekane Bay. A smaller heiau called "Hale o Kapuni" was built for shark gods that are known from the area. The shark heiau is now submerged in the bay, and black-tip sharks can be seen circling the heiau on most days.

Pu'ukoholā heiau is part of the National Park System and restoration has been ongoing for years. The Park Service has constructed a visitors center, paved pathways, and has restored areas using native plants that were once common in the area. Prior to restoration, the area had become overgrown with invasive species and littered with trash near the shoreline. Under management by the National Park Service the site is open to the public daily. Entry into the heiau is not permitted, but a series of paved trails allow visitors to traverse the site from the visitor's center to the shoreline. The site is also a great vantage point during whale watching season, which is from November to May in Hawai'i.



Photos courtesy of Narrissa.

AANHPIs in the Olympics

Historic ANHPI Wins for Team USA:

- Sunisa Lee, the first [Hmong-American](#) Olympic gymnast, won the [all-around gold medal](#)! Only 16 women have an Olympic all-around title to their name.
- Native Hawaiian Carissa Moore won the first Olympic gold medal for surfing.
- Filipina American Lee Kiefer is the first American to win a gold medal in the individual foil, the first Asian American woman to win a fencing gold in general, and only the second woman in U.S. history to win a gold medal in fencing.
- Japanese American Jay Litherland wins silver in the men's 400-meter swimming individual medley.

U.S Olympic swimmer Erica Sullivan on her historic win, being queer and Asian American

Hidilyn Diaz wins the first ever Olympic gold for the Philippines and sets a new Olympic record

13 year old Momiji Nishiya of Japan becomes one of the youngest Olympic gold medal winners

One World Kimono Project



FAPAC-DOI July trivia

Q1: In what year was FAPAC-DOI founded?

A1: 2017

Q2: Who was the first president of FAPAC-DOI?

A2: Thao Tran



Q3: January member spotlight - Barbara Green (NPS) is a big fan of what famous football player?

A3: Tom Brady



Q4: February member spotlight - Henry Chang (FWS) loves to do what?

A4: Surf



Q5: March member spotlight - Martin Moore (OIA) spent half his life in Pennsylvania and the latter half on what islands?

A5: Palau, Chuuk, and Hawaii



Q6: April newsletter - Tanya Joshua (OIA) wrote about Nicole Yamase, who was the first Pacific Islander to do what?

A6: Descend to the deepest spot on Earth



Q7: May member spotlight - Christine Ogura (FWS) wrote about her unconventional career path with over how many years in conservation?

A7: 25 years



Q8: March newsletter - What did Pamela A. Mathis (BLM) say keeps her going?

A8: Her mom



Election announcements

Nominees will be notified on **Monday, August 30** and those who accept the nomination will begin preparing their statements to FAPAC-DOI chapter members.

The voting timeline is as follows:

Tuesday, September 7 - Election ballot will be emailed to all members.

Friday, September 10 - All ballots must be received by 11:59pm EST.

Week of September 13 - Announcement of new officers.

The following members are eligible to vote in the upcoming election:

- **Regular members** - current DOI employees who hold annual or lifetime membership and pay annual dues to the national FAPAC organization.
- **Associate members** - non-government employees or DOI retirees who hold annual or lifetime membership and pay annual dues to the national FAPAC organization.

As a reminder, these are the offices up for election and they each have a term of one year (although an individual's total term of office can go up to two consecutive terms). Descriptions for each can be found in the FAPAC-DOI Constitution and Bylaws.

1. **President**
2. **Vice President of Programs**
3. **Vice President of Outreach**
4. **Vice President of Finance**

All questions about the 2021 election cycle can be directed to Janet Cushing, our 2021 Election Chair at jcushing@usgs.gov.

Member resources

What we're watching...

[Priya Krishna and Her Mom Explore 'Indian-ish' Food](#)

[Explore the tools Rajiv Surendra uses to make traditional Tamil food](#)

[#ChangeDestiny series](#)

[Astronaut Dr. Leroy Chiao talks about returning to life on Earth](#)

[Recipe For Change:](#)

Dine with Hasan Minhaj, Eugene Lee Yang, and Michelle Kwan

What we're reading...

[What It Means to be From Two Places at Once](#)

[St. Paul native Suni Lee inspires Hmong community at Olympic trials](#)

Join the FAPAC-DOI email list by reaching out to the board at fapacboard@ios.doi.gov
Become a member of FAPAC national at fapac.org/Membership