

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact: Deborah A. Duenas or Christine D. Camacho
E-mail: deborah.aflague@mail.dmhsa.guam.gov
Tel. Number: 671- 477-9079 or 477- 2301
Fax Number: 671- 477-9076
Website: www.peaceguam.org

790 Gov. Carlos G. Camacho Rd.
Tamuning, Guam 96913
Phone: 671-647-5330
Fax: 671-647-5402

EDDIE BAZA CALVO
Governor

RAY TENORIO
Lieutenant Governor

WILFRED G. AFLAGUE
Acting Director

Guam Builds Local Capacity to Prevent Suicide

Hagatna, March 16, 2011- The Prevention and Training Branch of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse (DMHSA) was awarded a three-year Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Grant for suicide prevention and early intervention in 2008 by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/ Center for Mental Health Services (SAMHSA/CMHS).

Since January 2010, a critical foundation has been laid for building local capacity among state and community level partners to respond to mental health issues as it relates to suicide to include the certification of Guam-based trainers in ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training). Fifteen (15) trainers received Living Works certification to conduct ASIST workshops for Pacific Islanders on Guam and in the neighboring islands.

On January 10-14, 2011, two DMHSA Prevention Branch staff, Michelle S.N. Sasamoto and Deborah A. Duenas attended *the ASIST Training for Trainer (T4T) - Consulting Trainer Apprenticeship* in Honolulu, Hawaii. Both successfully completed this 4-day apprenticeship and achieved Provisional Consulting Trainer status.

As ASIST Consulting Trainers, Ms. Sasamoto and Ms. Duenas possess the knowledge and skills to coach and support ASIST provisional trainers on Guam and within the Pacific Region in their efforts to pursue and attain ASIST Trainer Certification, thus helping to strengthen Guam's and the neighboring Pacific region's suicide prevention and early intervention infrastructure.

Guam's *Focus on Life* federally funded program initiatives to prevent further suicide have resulted in an established partnership and a pool of ASIST and SafeTALK trainers from DMHSA, the Department of Youth Affairs, Guam Army National Guard, the University of Guam – I Pinangon Campus Suicide Prevention Program, Youth For Youth LIVE! Guam and Sanctuary, Inc., who have trained over 700 community caregivers in ASIST and safeTALK suicide prevention workshops. Among trained are parents, first responders, teachers, nurses, policemen, military guardsman, and firefighters.

For more information about the ASIST consulting trainers or a schedule of upcoming suicide prevention trainings, contact the Prevention & Training Branch of the Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse at 477-9079 ~ 83 or visit www.peaceguam.org.