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TASK FORCE REPORT



Ippen Dron, All of Us Together:

A Collection of Tools to Address U.S. Nuclear Colonialism
in the Republic of the Marshall Islands

2017



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A Collection of Tools to Address U.S. Nuclear Colonialism in the Republic of the
Marshall Islands



ADVISORS

Professor José Antonio Lucero, Associate Professor of International Studies
Professor Holly Barker, Senior Lecturer in Anthropology

EVALUATOR

*The Honorable Gerald Zackios, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary,
Republic of the Marshall Islands Ambassador to the United States*

COORDINATOR

Sarah Tripi

EDITORS

Anna Learn
Brittany Pederson

MEMBERS

<i>Lauren Butrim</i>	<i>Xinlei Liu</i>
<i>Jessica Collins</i>	<i>Kayla Magers</i>
<i>Cole DeGideo</i>	<i>Hans Nothstein</i>
<i>Anais Gentilhomme</i>	<i>Jaclyn Nowak</i>
<i>Desiree Gross</i>	<i>Mikayla Podesta</i>
<i>Karlee Heath</i>	<i>Ian Snyder</i>
<i>James Kim</i>	<i>Rachael Tamngin</i>
<i>Erin Kitano</i>	<i>Monirangsey Touch</i>

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It is our greatest wish that these tools prove useful to the Marshallese community and that our increased understanding from this work makes each of us better allies.

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Executive Summary

We are a group of 19 students in the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies at The University of Washington. We have dedicated 10 weeks to looking at the many wrongs produced by the U.S. government's nuclear weapons testing program in the Marshall Islands, and how we can best support Marshallese people now in their pursuit of justice. We have created and implemented a range of tools from infographics and statistical reports to videos and media pitches in hopes that they can be used in advocacy efforts. This report presents these tools and further explains their importance and how they can be used.

Policy Recommendations:

In addition to our collection of tools, we have also set forth nine different policy recommendations that we encourage be implemented in regards to the Marshall Islands and the Marshallese people. The tools we have created can aid in their implementation. They are listed below:

- Use video, news pitch, and infographics to create public awareness, encouraging advocacy and support from political actors.
- Introduce the history and culture of the Marshall Islands into K-12 and university curriculum.
- Establish a formal day of commemoration for nuclear victims and survivors.
- Harness the capacity of aid organizations and educational institutions to promote quality health care in the Republic of the Marshall Islands.
- Pass House Bill 1291 in Washington State and similar bills to restore Medicaid for Micronesian populations.
- Amend the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act to include COFA citizens as qualified immigrants.
- Raise awareness on the legal working status of COFA citizens.
- Raise awareness of U.S. inflicted human rights abuses on the Marshall Islands.
- Partner with U.S. veterans and military in advocacy efforts.

Our Tool:

This report is a collection of tools, yet the report and its creators are the most meaningful tools. Before our journey began, the majority of us had never been exposed to the injustices imposed on the Marshallese and their land. Once we heard their stories, we felt compelled to create more than just a research report, but instead decided that it was necessary to also advocate for change. Our “action-based” task force wrote to our representatives, traveled to our state capitol to testify for those who did not have the ability to vote, and stepped out of our comfort zone to bring awareness

to a cause we have become passionate about. We hope that our work exceeds our Task Force and that our voices continue to be heard.

The report we have created is in itself a tool. Our collection of tools can be used to further our voices. They can be used to spread awareness, to contact representatives, and as templates so other constituents in Washington and nationwide who align themselves with the Marshallese can push for change. Most importantly, our report takes a stance that as University of Washington students we are allies with the Marshallese.

In Marshallese “Ippen Dron” means “All of Us Together”, for the past 10 weeks we have embodied this phrase and continue to stand in unison with the Marshallese in their fight for justice.

Call to Action:

We encourage anyone who reads this report, encounters one of our tools, or is curious about the Marshall Islands to also become involved in advocating with the Marshallese. This advocacy can take the form of raising awareness, agitating for legislative or school policy change, or simply building relationships with those affected by nuclear testing in a broad sense. The tools we have created can facilitate the form of action you choose to take. .

We hope that we can move you to take action, and we hope that our work is proof that change is possible.

Introduction

*“...because we deserve to do more than just
survive
we deserve
to thrive...”*

-Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, “*Dear Matafele Peinam*”

A History of Marshallese Strength

Although this Task Force focuses on the multifaceted effects of US nuclear weapons testing in the Marshall Islands, we do not wish for these tests to be seen as the beginning of this nation's history. The Marshall Islands and their people did not suddenly become noteworthy or important only after the US government tested bombs there. In the words of Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, the Marshallese “are not victims of a history forced upon [them]...instead [they] are agents of change.”¹ We wish to acknowledge this agency and resilience at the outset and throughout our report.

The Marshall Islands, far from being simply small bits of land, are a part of the “sea of islands”² that comprise Oceania. As Epeli Hau'ofa writes, “Oceania is vast, Oceania is expanding, Oceania is hospitable and generous, Oceania is humanity rising from the depths of brine and regions of fire deeper still”.³ This “ancient truth”⁴ far precedes--and continues to outlast--any colonial intervention in the region. Thus, while the Marshall Islands have borne witness to Spanish, German, Japanese, and finally US forms of colonialism,⁵ the strength and ingenuity of the people of this island nation are their legacy.

This strength can be seen, for example, in the Marshallese stickchart, a sea-navigation device made of strong coconut fronds peppered with cowrie shells, which show wave patterns and island locations.⁶ It can be seen in the intricate patterns of a Marshallese jaki, or mat, which can depict genealogy, land inheritance, and the “love between family members”.⁷ It can be heard in the roro, a chant or the act of shouting “rhythmically while doing a job requiring teamwork, as a canoe”.⁸ Most recently, it can be observed in the constant resistance the Marshallese have posed to the intertwined forces of colonialism, imperialism, and climate change.

From 1946 to 1958 the US government detonated 67 nuclear tests on Marshallese land. These were formidable tests; were their “combined explosive power [to be] parceled evenly over that 12 -year period, it would equal 1.6 Hiroshima-size explosions per day.”⁹ During this time, the US government, claims to the contrary notwithstanding, purposefully exposed Marshallese people to

¹ Jetnil-Kijiner, Kathy. “Iep Jaltok: A History of Marshallese Literature.” MA diss., University of Hawaii, 2014, 14.

² Hau'ofa, Epeli. “Our Sea of Islands” in *We Are the Ocean: Selected Works* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2008) 7.

³ Ibid., 16.

⁴ Ibid, 16.

⁵ Barker, Holly M. *Bravo for the Marshallese : Regaining Control in a Post-nuclear, Post-colonial World*. 2nd ed. Case Studies on Contemporary Social Issues. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2013, 16-19.

⁶ Jetnil-Kijiner, 25.

⁷ Jetnil-Kijiner, 34.

⁸ Ibid., 39.

⁹ Zak, Dan. “A Ground Zero Forgotten.” *The Washington Post*. November 27, 2015. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/national/2015/11/27/a-ground-zero-forgotten/>

radiation for purposes of scientific experimentation.¹⁰ However, the Marshallese people were not passive or silent in the face of these injustices. As early as 1954, Marshallese began to petition the United Nations to address the damages testing caused.¹¹ Despite U.S. government attempts to minimize or dismiss the extent of damage done to Marshallese land and bodies, Marshallese people insisted that the incidence of animal, plant, and changes to human bodies had “never happened before”¹² when a group of UN representatives came to visit the islands in 1961. Marshallese have pushed through lawsuits, petitions, newsletters, public hearings, and demonstrations, for the various forms of fallout from the nuclear tests to be recognized internationally.¹³

One such powerful example of active resistance came in the form of the “sail-ins” and “sit-ins” that occurred in the Marshall Islands from the 1960s through the 1980s.¹⁴ During these years, Marshallese people, frustrated at the lack of U.S. government redress for their grievances, physically occupied areas of the Marshall Islands that were reserved for U.S. missile testing. They endangered their lives by demanding that their bodies be seen, and that their demands for economic compensation be heard.

In 1982, when the Reagan administration refused to respond to an appeal by those displaced from Kwajalein Atoll for greater compensation for continued US military use of their land, 400 Marshallese sat-in on Kwajalein, in a direct action they called “Operation Homecoming”.¹⁵ The Reagan administration tried to intimidate the protesters by withholding vast sums of money owed to them. But the numbers of protesters, including women and children, who sailed-in and occupied areas of Kwajalein that were “restricted”¹⁶ for U.S. missile testing continued to swell until over 1,000 protesters had gathered.¹⁷ Ultimately, this sustained display of protest brought the U.S. government to the bargaining table, and the Marshallese received a raise in the rent the US was paying them in return for using their land as a missile testing site.

Marshallese people have bravely used their voices, in addition to their bodies, in order to advocate for justice. In 1983, the Marshallese activist Darlene Keju gave a speech at the World Council of Churches (WCC). Keju, clad in a traditional red-orange dress, placed her arms securely on the podium and addressed the audience with firm candor:

The Marshallese people today along with the Micronesians are fighting very hard for self-governing our nations, for independence. But we cannot do this alone without your support.

¹⁰ Barker, 41-42.

¹¹ Ibid., 24.

¹² Smith-Norris, Martha. *Domination and Resistance : The United States and the Marshall Islands during the Cold War*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016, 90.

¹³ Ibid., 8.

¹⁴ Smith-Norris, 123-124.

¹⁵ Ibid., 120.

¹⁶ Ibid., 119.

¹⁷ Ibid., 121, 122.

We ask for your support in terms of having our islands to be the way they were. Because in our islands, it's very funny, when the United States tells us they are there to protect us, we turn around and ask them, "Protect us from whom?" We have no enemies. In fact, you might be interested to know that us Marshallese do not have a word for "enemy." [Darlene was interrupted by applause from the audience.].¹⁸

Keju's rousing oratory emotionally shook the audience at the WCC, but the U.S. Ambassador Zeder attacked her zealously in a public letter for speaking about the U.S. abuse of Marshallese land and people, calling her speech "bizarre propaganda."¹⁹ That a U.S. Ambassador felt the need to launch an attack on Keju only speaks to the power of her words. She was able to "demonstrate how sensitive the U.S. government was to criticism of its policies and programs in the Marshall Islands."²⁰

Due to the advocacy of Darlene Keju and many other tireless Marshallese, the Marshall Islands did become independent from the U.S. government trust territory relationship in 1986. But the injuries, damages, and sufferings endured under the trust period did not end with independence. Lasting harm has been done to Marshallese land, lives, and families, and the unwillingness of the U.S. government to adequately address that harm has only compounded problems further. In addition, the consequences of climate change are developing into another critical situation for Marshallese, as their land is being subsumed by the rising waters of the Pacific, making living a stable, fruitful life more difficult. The very real and harmful effects of global warming are doubly ironic when it is considered that the "small island nations that contribute very little to the problem of climate change are most vulnerable to its effects."²¹

Carrying on the history of Marshallese resistance to forces of injustice is Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, who uses poetry to advocate for the Marshall Islands and their people. In one poem entitled "Tell Them", Jetnil-Kijiner speaks back against the general lack of awareness of Marshallese history in the US, while also acknowledging the beauty and strength of Marshallese people.

*tell them we are the hollow bulls
of canoes as fast as the wind
slicing through the pacific sea*

*tell them we are sweet harmonies
of grandmothers mothers aunties and sisters
songs late into night*

¹⁸ Johnson, Giff. *Don't Ever Whisper: Darlene Keju, Pacific Health Pioneer, Champion for Nuclear Survivors*. 2013, 143. (Darlene Keju's speech can be found in full at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hxCG1A5oJQ>)

¹⁹ Ibid., 143, 145.

²⁰ Ibid., 149.

²¹ Barker, 169.

*tell them we are papaya golden sunsets bleeding
into a glittering open sea
we are skies uncluttered
majestic in their sweeping landscape
we are the ocean
terrifying and regal in its power*

*and after all this
tell them about the water
how we have seen it rising
flooding across our cemeteries
gushing over the sea walls
and crashing against our homes
tell them what it's like
to see the entire ocean__level__with the land*

*but most importantly tell them
we don't want to leave
we've never wanted to leave
and that we
are nothing without our islands.²²*

Jetnil-Kijiner's words remind us that the Marshallese people are much more than victims of despicable US policies and abuse. Rather, Marshallese people, cultures, and histories are complex, made up of "sweet harmonies," "canoes as fast as the wind," "papaya golden sunsets bleeding," and the Marshallese people stay "majestic" in their deep dedication to their islands.

Continuing Effects of Nuclear Colonialism

The particular strand of nuclear colonialism that the U.S. government has enacted upon the RMI did not simply end in 1958 with the termination of the nuclear weapons testing program. Instead, the U.S. government continues to exploit the land and people of the RMI for its own geostrategic and military gain. The U.S. military still maintains the Ronald Reagan Missile Defense Test Site on Kwajalein Atoll and Wake Island and has an agreement included in the Compact with the Marshall Islands that allows the United States government "to use parts of the lagoon and several islands... The agreement allows the United States continued use of the U.S. Army Kwajalein Atoll missile test range until 2066 with an option until 2086."²³ The result of this ongoing weapons

²² "Tell Them" <https://kathyjetnilkijiner.com/2011/04/13/tell-them/>

²³ "Marshall Islands." *U.S. Department of State*. December 27, 2016. Accessed February 04, 2017. <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/26551.htm>.

testing on the RMI has been an exacerbation in the displacement of Marshallese people from their home islands. This displacement is most noticeable on the island of Ebeye, where overpopulation and other problems have led to the rapid deterioration of health and the environment. While the military testing site provides jobs to Marshallese with the highest hourly wage in the country, most live on Ebeye and commute by ferry, worsening the development issues already experienced on the island.²⁴ The continued presence of the U.S. government in the RMI in a weapons testing capacity is a testament to the lasting and pervasive nature of colonialism.

Decolonizing Our Research Practices

In Linda Tuhiwai Smith's words, "research is a humble and humbling activity."²⁵ Reading through the accounts of what the U.S. has done, and continues to do, in the Marshall Islands leaves us devastated by the cruelty and neglect of the U.S. government. But hearing and seeing the incessant Marshallese resistance to and dignity in the face of those injustices leaves us awed. We want to acknowledge the strong history and current reality of Marshallese advocacy and activism, and contribute to supporting those advocates and activists through the tools produced in this Task Force report.

Traditionally, the Jackson School of International Studies Task Force groups at the University of Washington produce hundreds of pages of research on a given topic in written report form, and conclude the report with policy suggestions. In this Task Force, we have decided that this conventional model--in which the emphasis of a report lies mainly in production of information about a subject for intellectual reasons--was not appropriate.

Instead of maintaining the illusion that research is an "innocent or distant academic exercise", we wanted to acknowledge that our research "is an activity that has something at stake and that occurs in a set of political and social conditions."²⁶ Any research done in U.S. institutions about the Marshallese occurs in the context of U.S. nuclear weapons testing on the Marshall Islands, the lack of adequate U.S. compensation for those events, the continuing refusal of the U.S. government to meet the basic needs of the Marshallese in the U.S. (such as providing access to healthcare), and the historical erasure of the nuclear weapons testing in U.S. schools and political discourse. We did not want our Task Force report to simply narrate these injustices and the challenges faced by the Marshallese, but rather we tried to envision ways in which we could directly address what is at stake. In the photograph above, the Micronesian members of our Task Force, Desiree Gross and Rachael Tamngin, share the knowledge they have found in the Burke Museum's collection of Marshallese artifacts and the work they have done with the local Marshallese community. Following their lead, we wanted to do more than gather information for the sake of our

²⁴ Zak, "A Ground Zero Forgotten."

²⁵ Tuhiwai Smith, 5.

²⁶ Tuhiwai Smith, 5.

own intellectual pursuits. We did not want to write *about* the Marshallese, but rather *to* and *for* Marshallese people in order to advocate for political change and social justice.

Furthermore, we wish to acknowledge that research projects conducted by US institutions in Marshallese communities have often perpetuated colonial violence. Through Project 4.1, for example, Marshallese people unknowingly served as research subjects in a US-funded study that sought to assess the effects of radiation on human populations. The US government intentionally exposed Marshallese on several islands to radiation fallout after the 1954 Bravo test,²⁷ and conducted invasive medical experiments on Marshallese people,²⁸ experiments which chiefly served the scientific interests of the US military, rather than the health needs of the Marshallese affected by the Bravo bomb. This is one very overt way in which Marshallese have served “as study subjects but rarely receive the results of research or recognize any direct benefit from research.”²⁹ Thus, throughout this Task Force process, we have sought to create tools that would directly benefit Marshallese communities and or help decolonize understandings of the Marshallese in the US, instead of simply producing information about Marshallese that may not be of direct use to them.

Positionality: Who are we? Where are we?

Before signing up for this course, many of us didn’t know that the US government had tested nuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands. Some in our class had heard about the nuclear weapons testing from family members or friends. And others had heard the testing mentioned in passing in other classes, as a softly-spoken footnote.

But we did not grow up seeing the words “Bravo”, “Enewetak”, or “radioactive ash” in our high school history textbooks. We do not hear U.S. presidents speak of Project 4.1 in the same breath that they laud “American greatness.” We had seen the cartoon “Bikini Bottom” in the SpongeBob TV show, but did not know the history of the atoll after which it was named.

For these reasons, we come to this Task Force without the assumption that we are experts on the issues we discuss in the following report, but rather with the knowledge that there is so much more we still do not know, so much that has been hidden from us.

We are fortunate enough to have two students from Micronesia within our Task Force, but there are no Marshallese students at the University of Washington. Unfortunately, there is no official census of the Marshallese population in Washington, however, there are communities in Spokane,³⁰

²⁷ Johnston, Barbara Rose., and Barker, Holly M. *Consequential Damages of Nuclear War : The Rongelap Report*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008. 45.

²⁸ Johnson and Barker, 46.

²⁹ Johnson and Barker, 49.

³⁰ Sowa, Tom. 2012. "Marshallese Making A New Life In Spokane". *The Spokesman-Review*. <http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2012/mar/04/marshallese-making-a-new-life-in-spokane/>

Everett, Auburn, Kent, and Federal way.³¹ That our own public university does not have any Marshallese students, we must acknowledge that our institution is failing this community.

Toolkit Structure

We have thus assembled a toolkit of pamphlets, infographics, videos, letter templates, petitions for curriculum changes, and much more in the hopes that the research we have done will be of direct use to Marshallese communities. Many of these tools are intended to be used not only by the Marshallese Ambassador and Marshallese communities more broadly, but also by us, as University of Washington students, as Seattle-ites, or as voters, in trying to implement changes on the University of Washington campus and in our local communities. We welcome people to use, critique, revise, or improve upon any of our tools. In this way, we hope to embody the concepts of “‘reporting back’ to the people and ‘sharing knowledge’”--we aim to be consistent with the principles of “reciprocity and feedback.”³²

Discussion of Tools

There are innumerable arenas in which advocacy work for, by, and with Marshallese communities can be--and has been--done. However, as a Task Force, we recognized that the time limitation of our report required us to focus on just a few of those arenas. We have therefore chosen to concentrate on creating concrete tools in media, education, healthcare, human rights, migration, and military spheres.

The media group sought to confront the issue of lack of general awareness and media attention about the continuing impacts and hardships facing the Marshallese as a result of their relationship with the US. Thus, the media group has compiled videos, news pitches, an official apology draft, and a hashtag in order to help create media and public awareness of Marshallese histories, and current situations vis a vis the US. Ultimately, the media tools will also function as a way to pressure US government officials to better serve Marshallese people in the US.

In addition, our team sought to improve understanding of the human rights abuses in the Marshall Islands in relation to international treaties and compacts that the United States drafted and adopted. These problems continue into the present with below than adequate living standards and lack of land. This team developed policy recommendations and a detailed history with visual aids to provide to those who may wish to partner with the RMI government.

The education group similarly acknowledged that Marshallese history is not presented well (if taught at all) in US educational curricula, and that US educational institutions tend to marginalize

³¹Stuteville, Sarah. 2014. "US Citizenship Just Out Of Reach, Marshall Islanders Fight For Food Aid". *The Seattle Globalist*. <http://www.seattleglobalist.com/2014/10/31/marshall-islands-food-assistance-citizenship-washington/30261>

³² Tuhiwai Smith, 15.

Marshallese students. For these reasons, this group has crafted tools that push for curriculum changes within the University of Washington, that would set up scholarship opportunities for Marshallese students here on our campus, and that would demand official recognition of a Marshallese Victims Remembrance Day on March 1st at both city and state levels.

There are several issues and possible solutions related to health care for the Marshallese people, this is why health care was divided into two subgroups: health care policy and health care aid. The health care policy group decided to tackle the issue of the inaccessibility and inadequate nature of health care provision for Marshallese communities within the US. This group has created an informative pamphlet, and a template advocacy letter that can be presented to elected officials within Washington State to advocate for the passage of House Bill 1291, and its companion bill in the Senate, SB 5683, which would allow COFA citizens to access Medicaid within our state. This pamphlet and letter template could also act as rough drafts for advocacy work in other states.

On the other hand, the health care aid group drafted case statements, similar to need statements for grant proposals, which can be sent to nonprofits and government aid organizations. These case statements focus on some of the most pressing health issues faced by the Marshallese communities: cancer, diabetes, and insufficient health care infrastructure. Additionally, this team created a directory of potential partners and collaborators which are ideal candidates for receiving the case statements.

The migration team outlined the reasons for the growing Marshallese population in the United States and challenges this Marshallese diaspora faces when they settle here. This group developed a pamphlet to improve understanding and the relationships between U.S. citizens and their Marshallese neighbors. This pamphlet may also be used to help gather support from constituents in states that are considering legislation to provide health care to COFA citizens.

The military team worked on proposals to organizations such as the Army Corps of Engineers for environmental cleanup of the nuclear testing sites and providing infrastructure to mitigate the impending damages from climate change. In addition, they sought to build relationships between the veteran community and the Marshallese people, especially the National Association of Atomic Veterans chapter in Washington as the Oregon chapter lobbied their state legislature to pass HB 2522, providing health care to COFA citizens in Oregon.

In the pages that follow, we hope to provide Ambassador Gerald Zackios, our Task Force evaluator and the official representative of the Marshallese in the US, with some useful tools that have emerged from our work. We look forward to his comments and suggestions as we see this report as part of a relationship with the Marshallese people that will not end with our time at the Jackson School.

Tell Them:

Creating Change through Media

“They told us not to speak, not to voice our opinions and everything, and they stopped us from trying to advocate or speak regarding what’s happening to our islands”

-Lucky Juda, a community elder originally from Bikini Atoll
March 1st, 2016, Interview with Marshallese Community Burke Museum

“...Media is the ultimate equalizer. It gives a voice and a platform to anyone willing to engage.”

-Amy Jo Martin, a social media entrepreneur

Kayla Magers, Jaclyn Nowak, Mikayla Podesta

Why Media is Important

Media has played an important role in every social, cultural and political movement in history. Even dating back to the times before modern forms of media (like television, radio, and mass printing), revolutionists used pamphlets and other small scale printings to air their grievances and persuade would-be supporters to their causes.³³ Media will be no less important in improving the lives, health and living conditions of the Marshallese people affected by the US nuclear tests. Raising awareness is the first step in urging US citizens to support actions and policy changes that will improve conditions for the Marshallese both in the US and in the RMI.

The Marshall Islands are not prominent on the front pages of mainstream media in the U.S. The Pacific Island nation appears in the New York Times on average once every five to six months³⁴. In comparison, European countries, Japan, and China are mentioned almost every day.³⁵

Furthermore, the Republic of the Marshall Islands page on the U.S. Department of State website does not mention the nuclear testing on Bikini Atoll; it only gives a rough outline of US financial aid to the RMI.³⁶ This reflects a bias on the part of the United States government by obscuring the negative actions it has pursued in Oceania. Some have noted the curious case of “SpongeBob SquarePants,” a popular children’s cartoon set in “Bikini Bottom” that features sea creatures disfigured by radiation, yet few viewers will have any knowledge of the nuclear history behind the show’s origins. The preliminary function of our media-based tools are thus to raise awareness among the U.S. public about the history of the RMI, and about Marshallese people more generally.

Using our media tools, we can not only raise awareness, but we can spur others into action in solidarity with the Marshallese. Many important movements in history have begun because people have been “shocked into action.”³⁷ Jelani Cobb, a journalism professor at Columbia University notes the importance of media in the birth of the Civil Rights Movement: “With media, images and film, you can force a conversation. You make it impossible for the issue to be pushed aside.”³⁸ We have a similar goal regarding awareness and action for the Marshallese people.

The primary objective concerning media and this Task Force is to create tools that will help raise awareness for the plight of the Marshallese people and to shock people into action. These tools include a video highlighting the struggle and mission of the Marshallese people and subsequently recommended actions and infographics to outline the injustices perpetrated by the US government.

³³ "The French Revolution as a European Media Event — EGO." EGO | Europäische Geschichte Online. Accessed February 04, 2017. <http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-media/>

³⁴ "Search Results: Marshall Islands ." New York Times. Accessed January 31, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/topic/destination/marshall-islands>.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ 13TH. October 07, 2016. Accessed February 06, 2017. <https://www.netflix.com/title/80091741>.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

The videos, infographics, and news pitches we have created will be made readily available to the average person so everyone will have the opportunity to learn about the Marshall Islands nuclear testing in addition to the rich culture of Marshallese.

Tools and their Use

We want the research and information we produce to be easy for audiences to understand. Our Task Force has produced a variety of tools with the belief that they will be most productive to call others to action in solidarity with the Marshallese. Our three goals in producing these media tools are as follows:

1. To raise awareness of the history and relationship between the RMI and the US.
2. To hold the US accountable for nuclear colonialism and the continuing effects of that relationship and encourage those with power to make changes.
3. To prompt consumers of this media into action in solidarity with the Marshallese.

These media tools can be used by Marshallese communities, the RMI embassy, and US citizens like us to advocate for change and to act. Awareness can inspire people to mobilize in support of policy and legislative change.³⁹ The tools we produced can also be used as visual aids, which humanize our research and findings, and can be useful for pressuring government officials and when writing speeches, organizing demonstrations, engaging in lobbying activities and so on.

To disseminate these tools, we have created two hashtags that are attached to our produced materials (#IppenDronAllTogether and #TellThem). #TellThem, references a poem by the Marshallese poet and advocate Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, and inspires others to speak out about all issues of injustice. As this hashtag is broader, it will hopefully gain more media attention. The second hashtag, #IppenDronAllTogether, has a Marshallese focus using the Marshallese language to say that “All of Us are Together.” This hashtag shows the collaborative relationship we strive for between the RMI and the U.S., recognizes Marshallese agency, and calls on allies in advocacy. This is a unique hashtag for our materials but can also be used by Marshallese communities and other allies. Our tools can be shared on social media through the hashtags. The hashtags can also be used as a way to search social media platforms for more resources.

These hashtags create a decentralized media campaign. This means they can be used to gain media awareness without being attached to a specific person or organization and therefore can be used by multiple groups and individuals to get more attention and lift Marshallese voices.

This is especially important to us for two reasons. First, we want to acknowledge that the information and tools we have created do not solely belong to our Task Force, but rather belong to

³⁹ Lawrence Wallack. “A Strategy for Advancing Policy and Promoting Health.” *Health Education & Behavior*. Vol 23, Issue 3, September 4 2016, 293-317.

Marshallese communities as well. Second, we want these tools to continue to be in use beyond the time frame of our Task Force. In order for this to happen we have created a website to store all of the tools our task force has created in one place. <https://ippendronalltogether.wordpress.com/>

Media Strategy and Messaging

The messaging strategy specifically articulates *what* is going to be said while the media strategy articulates *who* is going to hear what is being said. The messaging strategy is to inspire outreach and activism. It's important to reach out to a number of different news outlets pitching the story of the Marshallese people, their experience with the United States, the aftermath of that colonialism, and call readers to action. The media strategy should capitalize on social media platforms and encourage the use of digital voices to build coalitions of support. As mentioned above, we have branded our communications materials with unique hashtags #IppenDronAllTogether and #TellThem.

This media strategy will keep two main principles in mind. First, messages must maintain a benefit orientation. This means that messages must be able to outlast this task force and be of ongoing service to Marshallese in the U.S. and in the RMI. Second, messages must follow the KISS principle — Keep It Short & Sweet. Powerful messages are precise. Effective messages are clear. The goal is to make an impact on the public so they will remember the injustices faced by the Marshallese people and so that they will be motivated to act in solidarity with the Marshallese.

The messages themselves are the most critical aspect of the Messaging Strategy. The more messages in the strategy, the less effective the strategy will be. The Marshallese Messaging Strategy should consist of no more than three specific messages. The first message should be basic, stating that Marshallese issues are important and that something terrible was done to their home by the U.S. government. The second message should inform the public of the consequences of the terrible happenings. The final message should be a call to action.

Media Attention through News Pitches

Since our goal is to increase public awareness of nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands, the consequences of these tests, and push for a call to action, the story needs more public exposure. When news outlets start to report the Marshallese stories, populations can be mobilized into political action.

A news pitch is a communications tool that, when used correctly, notifies relevant journalists of an interesting story. We have created one in hopes of gaining attention from the press. This tool will be useful as it can quickly be modified and distributed for use across a wide range of news outlets to reach segmented target audiences. Use of this tool will help launch the journey of media outreach, stimulate discourse around this issue, mobilize individuals to action, and hasten a public demand for solutions.

There are a few keys to success when creating a news pitch. First, it is important to create a pitch that is consistent with the messages of the overall strategy. Next, it must be brief but also concise. Most importantly, the pitch must be personalized to the recipient journalist. Be mindful of the publication and especially said journalist's specific section. The content of the news pitch should be brief but must address the mission. The pitch should include a brief history of the U.S. involvement in the Marshall Islands noting the nuclear testing itself, and the subsequent health and migration issues. To make it more captivating, the pitch should include a few statistics to illustrate why this story matters. It should also include some sort of Marshallese testimony, quote, etc., to personalize the story if we seek to pitch it as a human interest piece. Lastly, the pitch must convey to the journalist that readers need to be presented with a call to action recommended in the pitch.

Outreach Channels

Once the sample news pitch we have created has been edited so as to reflect relevant journals, journalists, and issues of focus, the pitch can be distributed by the RMI Embassy, activists, and allies to any news outlet.

Organization	Reporter	Areas of Coverage	Contact Information
The UW Daily	Special Section: Trevor McAllister Editor in Chief Mohammed Kloub		Newsroom phone: 206-543-2700 specials@dailyuw.com editor@dailyuw.com
The Seattle Times	Dave Phillips		
The New York Times	Nicholas Kristof	Author of “Half The Sky”. Covers Women’s rights and climate change.	kristof@nytimes.com
The New York Times “Fixes”	Tina Rosenberg David Bornstein	Both focused on social issues and potential solutions, human rights, education, and health. Internationally focused.	Twitter: @tirosenberg Twitter: @dnbornstein
Quartz	Jake Flanagan	Primarily focused on geopolitics, human rights, and post colonialism	hi@qz.com Twitter: @jakeflanagin
Quartz	Svati Kirsten Narula	Philanthropy	svati@qz.com Twitter: @svatikirsten
Mashable	Katie Dupere “Social Good Reporter”	Heavily focused on women’s rights	contact@mashable.com www.katiedupere.com
Mashable	Matt Petronzio “Social Good Reporter”		contact@mashable.com mpetronzio@mashable.com www.mattpetronzio.com
Buzzfeed	Katie Baker	Primarily focused on social issues	www.katiehmbaker.com katie.baker@buzzfeed.com
Huffington Post	Lydia O’Connor	Covers social good issue. Environment. Inequality	Twitter: @lydiaoconnor

Sample News Pitch Draft

Subject Line: (Must reflect the story subject)

Hi (Journalist),

What if the United States had dropped the equivalent of 1.6 Hiroshima bombs every day for 12 years onto an area of land no bigger than 2.3 square miles?

I'll get straight to the point. Given the belligerent discourse around nuclear weapons from President Trump's new Administration and your previous coverage of (x issue) and (y issue), I thought I'd share with you a quick story of nuclear colonialism in the Marshall Islands.

(Tell the story here -- 200 words MAX)

I'd love the opportunity to chat with you if you're interested in this story.

Thank you kindly,

(Name)

(Email address)

(Phone Number)

Infographics

Another tool that can be used to raise awareness for the wrongdoings against the Marshallese people are infographics. The infographics we have created display particular facts about the nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands. With these infographics, we wanted to draw inspiration from the use of images in the Civil Rights Movement. For example, iconic images of police dogs attacking peaceful protestors, videos of teenagers being sprayed with fire hoses, and pictures of lynching victims spurred social outrage and political change. We hope to achieve a similar result with images of nuclear testing and the effects of radiation on people.

The first infographic we created depicts a number of various dots. Each dot is meant to represent a bomb the size of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. All of the nuclear testing done by the US in the Marshall Islands equates to 1.6 Hiroshima bombs being dropped every day for twelve years. This info-graphic will be particularly useful because it equates the US nuclear testing to something that most Americans are already familiar with. The atomic bomb droppings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki are events that are still talked about today while the nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands remain an unknown topic to many people.

The second graphic, related to the first, depicts the Hiroshima explosion and how the Bravo test conducted in the Marshall Islands by the US had 1,000 times the explosive power of the Hiroshima bomb.⁴⁰ It also states that radioactive fallout from just this test, one of sixty-seven, was found in cows in the State of Tennessee.⁴¹

The third infographic provided depicts a side-by-side comparison of radiation experiments performed by US doctors on Marshallese people with Tuberculosis experiments performed by Nazi doctors on Jewish prisoners. Similar to the Hiroshima info-graphic, the purpose of this is to draw a parallel to a topic that many Americans have prior knowledge of. The Holocaust is a well-known event and a popular media topic, even today. The New York Times published two articles mentioning the Holocaust in the first week of 2017 alone.⁴² Equating the human experimentation performed on the Marshallese with human experimentation performed on Jewish citizens evokes a certain level of pathos from the viewer, which can help generate sympathy for the Marshallese people.

The final info-graphic that we have included illustrates the injustice pertaining to the citizenship status of Marshallese citizens under the COFA agreement. Under this agreement, Marshallese citizens can live and work in the US legally but do not qualify for Medicare, Medicaid and other social welfare programs.

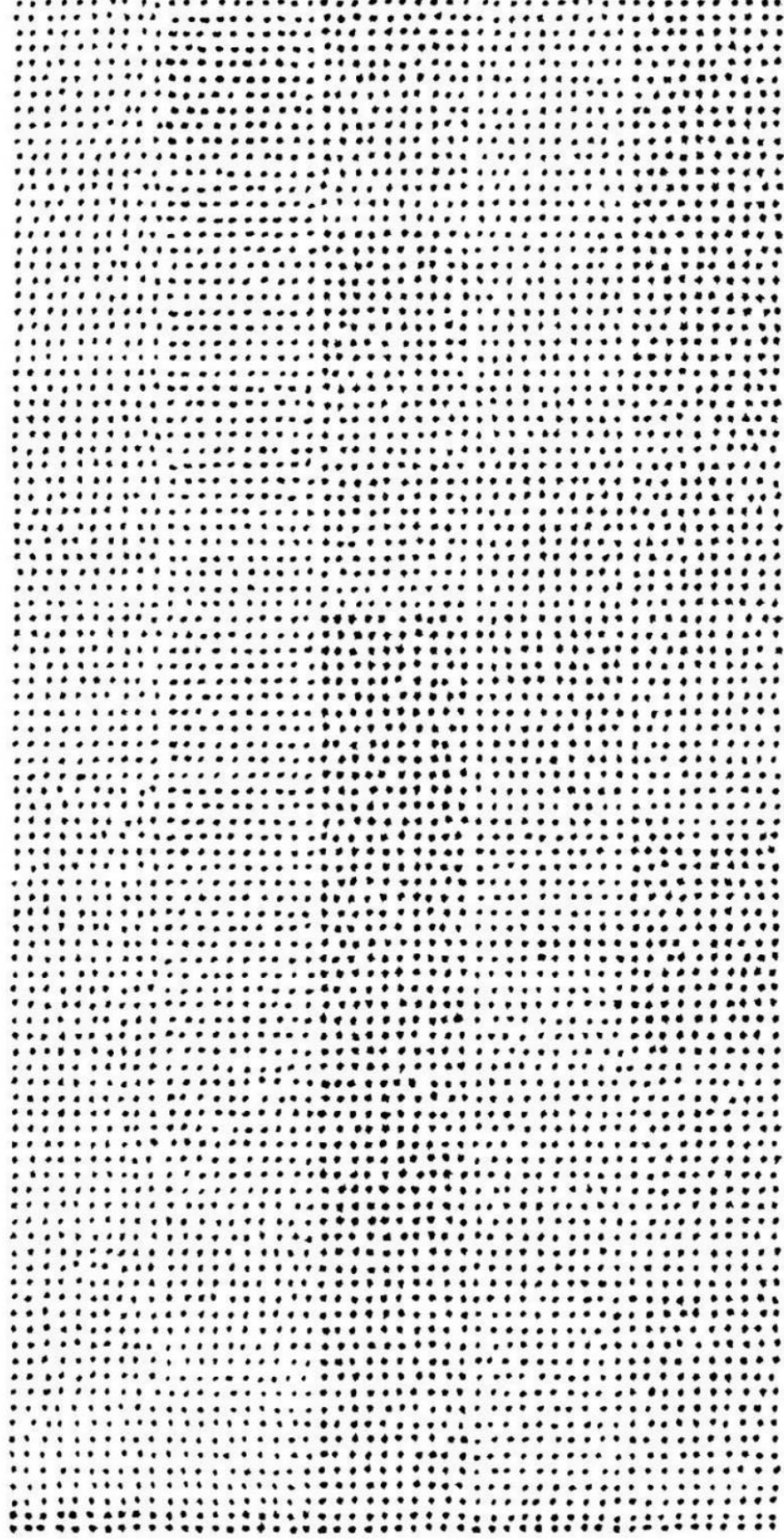
⁴⁰ Zak, Dan, "A Ground Zero Forgotten," The Washington Post, November 27, 2015.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² The New York Times. Accessed February 2, 2017.

<https://query.nytimes.com/search/sitesearch/?action=click&contentCollection=AsiaPacific&ion=TopBar&WT.nav=searchWidget&module=SearchSubmit&pgtype=article#/the%20holocaust>

The **NUCLEAR YIELD** in the **MARSHALL ISLANDS**
equates to having dropped **1.6 HIROSHIMA BOMBS**
EVERY DAY for **12 YEARS.**



ONE DOT FOR ALL 7,008 HIROSHIMA BOMBS

#TellThem #IppenDronAllTogether

**MARSHALLESE PEOPLE LEGALLY
LIVE IN, WORK IN, GO TO SCHOOL
IN, AND JOIN THE MILITARY IN
THE UNITED STATES.**



**THEY PAY TAXES IN THE U.S.
BUT DO NOT RECEIVE BENEFITS
OF CITIZENSHIP LIKE THE RIGHT
TO VOTE OR ACCESS TO
HEALTHCARE.**



#TellThem #IppenDronAllTogether

The BRAVO test
conducted in 1954 by
the US in the
Marshall Islands
detonated with **1,000**
times the force of the
Hiroshima explosion



RADIATIVE FALLOUT FROM BRAVO WAS LATER
FOUND IN COWS IN TENNESSEE (US)

HIROSHIMA (ATOMIC) STRIKE

The Washington Post, Dan Zak.

#TellThem #IppenDronAllTogether

1947: DURING THE NUREMBURG TRIALS, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT CONDEMNS THE NAZI REGIME FOR HUMAN EXPERIMENTS ON THOUSANDS OF JEWISH PRISONERS.



Seven-year-old Rongelap girl contaminated with fallout: beta ray hair loss at 28 days and complete regrowth some 6 months later.

Blistering and depigmentation on upper surface of bare feet by beta rays from fallout sticking to moist, thin skin, at 28 days after burst (left) and recovery 6 months later (right).

1954: THE U.S. GOVERNMENT EXPOSES THOUSANDS OF UNWILLING MARSHALLESE PEOPLE TO DEADLY RADIATION TO STUDY ITS EFFECTS ON THE BODY.

The Role of Video in Media: Creating Awareness and Inspiring Change through Visual Stories

We have produced three video products:

- Ippen Dron All of Us Together
- Subtopic videos: Education, Health Care Policy, Health Care Aid, and Advocacy
- “This is Important Because...”

The goal of the videos we have created is to humanize our knowledge and findings. The videos show our faces and why we care about Marshallese people. As U.S. citizens and voters, we think that showing our interest on a personal level is important as we call for the U.S. to take responsibility and action.

The video, “Ippen Dron All of Us Together,” summarizes our work and how the information and resources we produced can be used within and beyond this Task Force. This and all the videos will be on our YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDzsmHu-N8sbnMpomWwiSg>) and our Task Force website (<https://ippendronalltogether.wordpress.com/>) to be easily viewed and shared.

To stand with the Marshallese, we collected Marshallese stories from *Bravo for the Marshallese*, interviews from a March 1st, 2016 event on the UW campus, and Jetnil-Kijiner’s poems. After hearing from the editors and coordinator, the members of each subgroup, and our professors, the video ends with a call to action. Viewers are urged to contact their state Representatives, Senators and Congress people.

Out of this video multiple short videos have been created. Each team section is turned into its own video. It will also be available for anyone on YouTube and our website. A Marshallese group could use this to rally support for specific causes or issues, it could be used by healthcare advocacy groups or organizations, or it could be released before health care bills are voted on.

The last video is a collection of “This is important because...” statements from each person on our Task Force explaining why it is crucial that people know the history of the nuclear weapons testing program in the RMI. This can be used for a media campaign to emphasize that people care, it can be used for promotion, lobbying, or any other purpose to raise awareness and inspire action and empathy.

Video Strategy

So why video?

Video is easily shared on social media platforms as well as news and organization websites. Social media and online audiences far exceed traditional media audiences in size and the penetration of information on social media is increasing. ⁴³“It has been estimated that it would take 38 years for

⁴³ Schein, Rebecca, Kumanan Wilson, and Jennifer Keelan, “Literature review on effectiveness of the use of social media”, Peel Public Health, 2010.

radio to disseminate a message to 50 million people, 13 years for television, 4 years for the internet... and less than 3 months for Facebook.”⁴⁴

Online and social media are important for wide dispersal of a message and video is an important part of these forms of media. Video creates a lot of attention and engagement. More and more of internet content is video and “74% of all internet traffic in 2017 will be video.”⁴⁵ People are more likely to look at and engage an issue, article, campaign, business, etc. if there is a video to watch rather than just an article.⁴⁶ “Studies show that using the word “Video” in the subject line of an email can increase open rates by 19 percent, click-through rates by 65 percent and reduce unsubscribers by 26 percent.”⁴⁷ Video work is extremely important in engaging an audience. Videos are also the most likely medium to be re-shared.⁴⁸ Visual representation is another way for people to process and understand information beyond text. Not only is it visually appealing and engaging but video is easier for the brain to process therefore videos can create a larger impact.⁴⁹

Video is engaging but audience attention span is only around 8 seconds.⁵⁰ As a result, we have created attention grabbing introductions for our videos. The ‘This is Important’ video, being much shorter than the others, is a great strategy to gain interest in watching the longer video and topic videos, search for more information, and hopefully inspire viewers themselves to become advocates. The longer videos still have an attention grabbing introduction, but are better used for topic specific purposes and targeted audiences. Once an audience watches the longer videos it is important to keep the viewer engaged so they are structured dynamically. Each short video is around 3 minutes which is the best time for maintaining viewer interest.⁵¹ It has also been shown that videos and messages of a campaign are best understood under a larger story and theme.⁵²

We hope that the videos can be used as a form of political pressure. Media advocacy can democratize discussion around different issues.⁵³ “This is important because community voices can be conveniently ignored in the din of policy debate. The mass media, can amplify voices so that policymakers cannot be ignored.”⁵⁴ It is our hope that our voices and use of Marshallese testimony in the videos and in our Task Force report will not only raise awareness but also be used to pressure our UW and Seattle community as well as policymakers and inspire the general public to use their voice as well to advocate and mobilize for change in solidarity with Marshallese people.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Joshi, Swati, “Why Video Marketing is the New Darling of the Marketing World”, The Huffington Post, February 15, 2016.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Litt, Michael. “Five Tips for Effective Video Marketing.” American Marketing Association. April 17, 2014.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Wallack.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

The videos will be on our website, YouTube, shared on Facebook and can be posted to other social media platforms with our hashtag. They will be used by our Task Force and while on the internet they are free to be used by Marshallese communities and other groups and organizations to gain support and inspire change to aid the Marshallese people and call for the US to take responsibility.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning, as Wallack says,

Media strategies are not the primary concern but rather are developed to support policy objectives. Achieving the goals and objectives of any program is a long-term and complex process that involves a range of strategies; media approaches are only one such strategy, although they represent a particularly powerful tool that can be used to support the overall policy goals.⁵⁵

Conclusion

The best way to ensure that we truly foster change in healthcare, education and human rights policy for the Marshallese is to convince people that this issue is something that they should care about. This is where the role of media tools becomes crucial. The goal for our media tools (infographics, videos and hashtags) is not only to raise awareness of the issue but prove to the public (specifically the voting age population) that this is an issue that they should care about and want to make a change. We do not want our work to end when the Task Force ends. By creating media-based resources, we can see to it that our project and the tools we have created take on lives of their own outside of the confines of this report.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Beneath Bikini Bottom:

The Colonial Symbolism of the Sponge



Anna Learn

Introduction:

There is little explicit mention of the RMI and its nuclear history in the U.S. media. However, subtle references to the nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific Island nation exist in popular culture--most notably in the TV show SpongeBob SquarePants. But while these references to the RMI may be “seen” by viewers, their deeper meanings often remain invisible. In an effort to pull the curtain back on these deeper levels of meaning and engage the general U.S. public in learning about the U.S. nuclear colonial legacy in the Marshall Islands, the following tool will present an analysis of the colonial symbolism of the SpongeBob SquarePants TV show.

The tool is written in the format of a pop culture analysis article. It is posted on our website (<https://ippendronalltogether.wordpress.com/>), and is easily “shareable” through that link. This article tool is intended to be disseminated broadly through social media channels, as a way of engaging audiences outside of academia in learning about the intertwining histories of the U.S. and the RMI. The article tool is thus meant to raise awareness among its readers about this hidden history, and to inspire advocacy efforts. By presenting the nuclear weapons testing program and its harmful effects through the lens of a widely seen TV show, the article demonstrates to the general U.S. public how ‘close to home’ this issue really is.

Article Tool:

Beneath Bikini Bottom:

The Colonial Symbolism of the Sponge⁵⁶

“The episode opens with a bubble transition, and we see a coral reef under the sea. The camera zooms to initiate parallax scrolling, which reveals the city of Bikini Bottom. It continues zooming to show a brown rock, a Moai head, and a pineapple, which each contain inhabitants...”

-Episode 1 Season 1 “Help Wanted”



On March 1, 1954, the U.S. government detonated a thermonuclear bomb on the island of Bikini, in the Marshall Islands, as part of its nuclear weapons testing program. This bomb, called “Bravo,” entirely vaporized the coral atoll of Bikini, leaving a gaping crater in Bikini’s lagoon.⁵⁷ The Bravo shot also released

⁵⁶ Barker, Holly. “From Godzilla to SpongeBob: The Cultural Fallout of the US Nuclear Testing in the Marshall Islands.” <http://faculty.washington.edu/stevehar/Barker%20Nuclear%20Culture.pdf>

This article is an adaptation of the parallels Dr. Barker initially drew between the nuclear weapons testing in the RMI, and the TV show SpongeBob SquarePants.

⁵⁷ Barker, Holly M. *Bravo for the Marshallese : Regaining Control in a Post-nuclear, Post-colonial World*. 2nd ed. Case Studies on Contemporary Social Issues. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2013, 22.

massive amounts of radiation, which fell down across the neighboring atolls in the Marshall Islands in the form of ash, or radioactive fallout.⁵⁸

The U.S. government did not adequately warn the Marshallese who were still living on these nearby islands about the dangers of radioactive fallout before detonating the Bravo test, and so when the ash began to shower down from the sky, “children thought it was snow...they played with and even ate the ash.”⁵⁹ The U.S. government would later conduct experiments on these Marshallese people who were “accidentally” exposed to radiation fallout through a study called Project 4.1.⁶⁰ The Bravo shot, in addition to the other 66 nuclear test bombs that were detonated in the Marshall Islands between 1946 and 1958 by the U.S. government, would ultimately cause severe health problems for many Marshallese, deformities in many Marshallese children born after the nuclear tests, and irreparable damage to the plants, animals, land, and water of the Marshall Islands, including Bikini.

“Narrator: Ah, the sea... so fascinating. So wonderful. Here, we see Bikini Bottom, teeming with life. [Shows from left to right Patrick's, Squidward's, and SpongeBob's houses. Zooms in on SpongeBob's house] Home to one of my favorite creatures, SpongeBob SquarePants. Yes, of course he lives in a pineapple, you silly.”

-Episode 1 Season 1 “Help Wanted”



Given this historical context, the TV show *SpongeBob SquarePants*—its “Bikini Bottom” setting, and the characters who reside within this semi-fictional space—acquire new meanings. With the knowledge that Bikini Island is a real, physical place with a specific history of nuclear colonialism, “Bikini Bottom” becomes more than just a colorful backdrop, absent of political significance. The underwater town and its

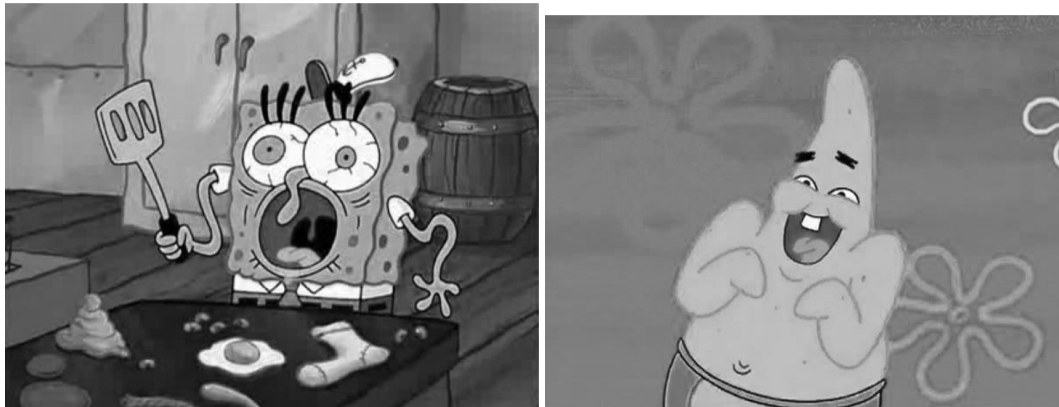
⁵⁸ Johnston, Barbara Rose., and Barker, Holly M. *Consequential Damages of Nuclear War: The Rongelap Report*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008, 17.

⁵⁹ Barker, 23.

⁶⁰ Barker, 41.

inhabitants must instead be understood to constitute a commercialized reflection of an *actual* island nation, of *real* (Marshallese and U.S.) people, and of a true story of U.S. colonialism in the country.

By looking into the watery depths of Bikini Bottom, we are thus able to see silenced histories, and colonial power dynamics reflected back up at us.



Take, for instance, the characters in *SpongeBob SquarePants* themselves. The inhabitants of Bikini Bottom look similar to real marine creatures (a starfish, a crab, a squid, a sea sponge) but they have been fattened, squared, squashed, or otherwise distorted from their ‘real-life’ forms through cartoon animation, resulting in odd-looking characters with human-like qualities. Throughout the show, *SpongeBob* and his friends elicit laughs from their viewers by further morphing their features into silly, exaggerated expressions.

These anthropomorphized, mutated inhabitants of Bikini Bottom become less funny, however, when it is taken into account that one significant effect of the U.S. nuclear weapons testing on the *real* residents of the Marshall Islands was the birth of deformed babies mutated by radiation fallout.



“In 1958 and 1959 [right after the end of the nuclear weapons testing] most of the women gave birth to something not resembling human beings...[a woman] gave birth to something that resembles a monkey...there was a child born at that time and there was no shell covering the top of that child’s head.”⁶¹

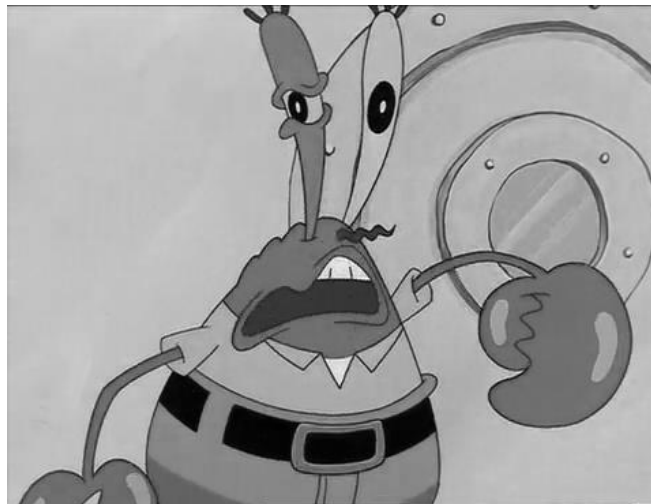
⁶¹ Johnson and Barker, 13-14.

“I gave birth to something that was like grapes...after the grapes, I had a third child. It wasn’t like a child at all. It had no bones and was all skin. When I gave birth they said, “Ak ta men en?” [What is that thing?]”⁶²



“After the bomb testing she got pregnant with a child...when the baby was born it had two heads...two heads. It was like two heads...There was a small thing coming out of the head like two—it wasn’t a head but it was like a head that thing. That child didn’t live. Born and died...”⁶³

“There is a boy, actually a young man now, whose head is so large that his body is unable to support it and his only means of getting around is to crawl backwards dragging his head along—like the movements of a coconut or hermit crab...”⁶⁴



Thus, while birth deformities in babies born after the nuclear weapons testing program have been understood by Marshallese people to be profoundly tragic happenings, in the *SpongeBob* TV show, mutations are presented as comical. When *SpongeBob* morphs his facial features into an unrecognizable

⁶² Johnson and Barker, 15.

⁶³ Barker, 103.

⁶⁴ Barker, 54.

expression, or Patrick's body becomes randomly disfigured, the viewer is invited to laugh. In this way, the inhabitants of Bikini Bottom are mimicking and mocking the tragedies of their above-water, real-life counterparts from Bikini atoll and other Marshallese islands, who have witnessed birth deformities and mutations in the flesh. By portraying disfigurements as little more than fodder for humor, SpongeBob acts to legitimize the dismissal by the U.S. government of the claims by Marshallese that the nuclear testing program has adversely affected the health (especially the reproductive health) of the population.

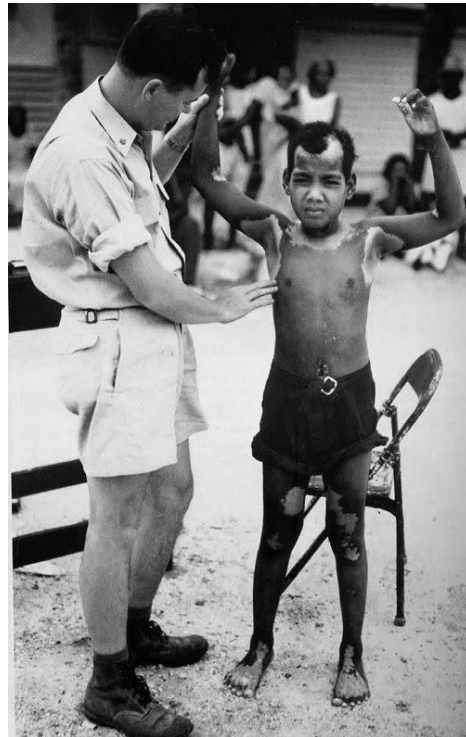


Perhaps the most interesting character on the show to view through the lens of the nuclear weapons testing program is Sandy Cheeks. Sandy is a science-savvy squirrel from Texas, who is sent to Bikini Bottom to observe the sea creatures there. Since Sandy is a land animal, she wears a spacesuit outfitted with an air bubble around her head, and lives in an air-filled dome in Bikini Bottom. In these ways, Sandy is insulated from the atmosphere of Bikini Bottom.



Sandy, as a scientist sent to Bikini Bottom from the U.S., has real-life counterparts in the scientists sent to Marshallese islands by the U.S. government during the nuclear weapon testing program. These U.S. scientists were, among other things, concerned with observing the effects of near-lethal quantities of radiation *on humans*.⁶⁵ However, the scientists and other personnel from the U.S. took great precautions to insulate *themselves* from any possible negative side effects of radiation exposure. While Marshallese people downwind of the Bravo shot were not evacuated from their islands until two days after the bomb had been detonated, U.S. personnel left the area of the Bravo fallout cloud rapidly.⁶⁶

Marshallese man John Anjain narrates the day immediately following the Bravo bomb detonation in 1954:



“...they said they had come to inspect the damage caused by the bomb. They said they would spend twenty minutes looking...the two men [then] returned quickly to their plane and left without telling anyone [on Rongelap island] that the food, water, and other things were harmful to human beings.

Everyone was quite surprised at the speed with which the men surveyed everything in the island and returned to their plane.”⁶⁷

Just as Sandy is protected from an environment that would be harmful to her with her air bubble, so the U.S. Department of Energy personnel protected themselves from a toxic, irradiated environment to the greatest extent possible, while allowing Marshallese people to be exposed to that same environment. Indeed, although the official U.S. Atomic Energy Commission report on the Bravo test calls the human exposure to

⁶⁵ Barker, 41.

⁶⁶ Barker, 41.

⁶⁷ Johnson and Barker, 12.

the ensuing radiation fallout “accidental,” there are many documents which prove that the U.S. government was aware that some Marshallese populations would be exposed to radiation fallout—and they chose to not evacuate those people before detonating the bomb.⁶⁸ Sandy’s air bubble and her air dome make it known to the viewer that U.S. citizens are deserving of a higher standard of health than the native inhabitants of Bikini Bottom. This is a reflection of the double standard of radiation fallout protection seen in the aftermath of the Bravo bomb in the Marshall Islands.



It is also pertinent to note that Sandy is one of the most intelligent characters on the *SpongeBob* show. She knows a lot about science, and is mainly portrayed as the ‘rational’ or ‘level-headed’ one, in comparison to *SpongeBob* or *Patrick*. That Sandy is depicted as mentally superior to *SpongeBob* and *Patrick* is significant given that the U.S. nuclear bombing of the Marshall Islands, and the human radiation experiments conducted on Marshallese people were rationalized through similar constructions of U.S. superiority and Marshallese inferiority.

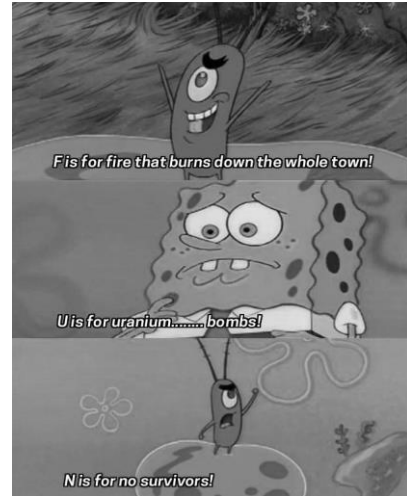
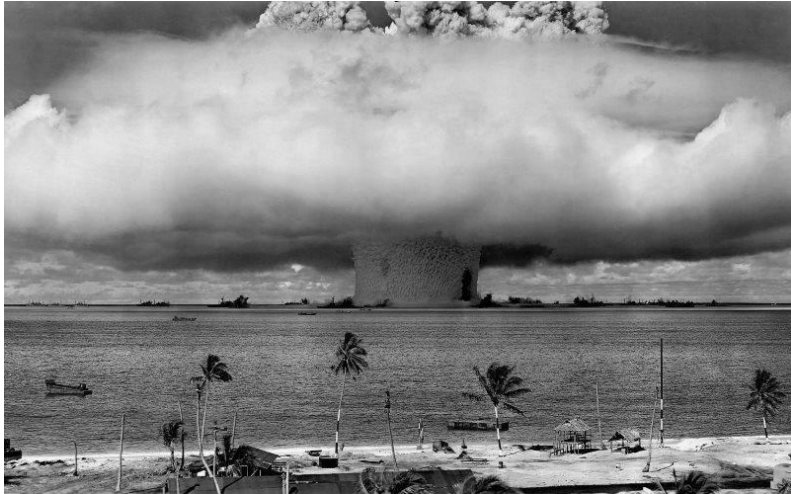
Indeed, “the U.S. government researchers viewed the Marshallese, with their brown skin and “traditional” lifestyle, as primitives—something less than human beings.”⁶⁹ In one internal meeting the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (the entity that managed the nuclear weapons testing program) justified the exposure of Marshallese people to irradiated land by saying, “while it is true that these people do not live, I would say, the way Westerners do, civilized people, it is nevertheless also true that these people are more like us than the mice.”⁷⁰ U.S. officials running the nuclear testing program relied on notions of U.S./Western civilization in comparison to Marshallese backwardness/savagery in order to legitimize the many harms the nuclear tests caused for Marshallese people. Sandy serves to perpetuate this idea of a dichotomy in intelligence between those from the U.S. with those in Bikini Bottom/the Marshall Islands.

⁶⁸ Barker, 41.

⁶⁹ Barker, 47.

⁷⁰ Barker, 46.

And so, to pose the query that every SpongeBob SquarePants episode opens with—*who lives in a pineapple under the sea?* The answer to this question is notable not for the response it receives (“SpongeBob SquarePants!”) but for who is *excluded* from living within the boundaries of the show—that is to say, humans. The atoll of Bikini becomes reconstructed through the show as Bikini Bottom—a place in which only silly, cartoon characters, and not humans, are able to exist. This inaccessibility of Bikini Bottom to humans reflects the reality of many Marshallese islands, where the radioactive fallout from U.S. nuclear bomb tests has rendered several atolls, like Rongelap and Bikini, as too contaminated with radiation to be safe for humans to inhabit.⁷¹



In this way, the actual Marshallese are erased from the island of Bikini in the SpongeBob show—a lack of representation that echoes the displacement of Marshallese from their land due to the effects of the nuclear weapons testing program.

Bikini Bottom is painted as a playground for the cartoon SpongeBob and his animated friends, naturalizing the absence of Marshallese people from the ‘real-life’ Bikini, and other Marshallese islands due to the harm that the U.S. government nuclear weapons testing program inflicted there.

By welcoming viewers to laugh at mutated characters, to internalize the message that characters from the U.S. are superior to characters from Bikini Bottom, and to accept that Bikini Bottom is just a playground for cartoon characters, the TV show *SpongeBob SquarePants* serves to present, naturalize, and legitimize a particular narrative of U.S. colonialism in the Marshall Islands, while silencing other versions of that colonial story.

⁷¹ Johnson and Barker, 20.



Seeking Justice: Human Rights Violations by the United States in the Marshall Islands



Figure 11.70. Loss of hair in child exposed to approximately 175 roentgens of gamma radiation.



Figure 11.97a. Beta burn on neck 1 month after exposure.

Karlee Heath

Introduction

In this section of our Task Force report, the actions of the United States government during the nuclear testing program will be measured against international human rights standards. In many instances, the U.S. is not legally obligated to comply with these human rights standards, either because it has not ratified the treaty mentioned, or because these standards came into effect after the testing program. However, even when the U.S. is legally obligated, it is a difficult task to hold the United States accountable, as we have seen with the many legal efforts by the Marshallese for justice over the years.

This human rights-centered section of the report, and the timeline graphic that accompanies it, are meant to be tools for advocacy efforts, and should be widely dispersed to non-governmental organizations working to further human rights and bring justice to violations, as well as through social media channels to educate the general U.S. public about these violations.

By presenting the history to the nuclear testing program in the RMI in terms of human rights, we hope to create public awareness about the injustice of the U.S. government's nuclear weapons testing program in the RMI, and catalyze a public outcry on this issue. If more citizens of the United States come to understand this hypocritical history, there is a greater likelihood that these human rights violations will be addressed due to increased public attention on the matter.

After a brief history of the context of the U.S. government's human rights violations in the RMI, this section will present the specific human rights provisions that have been violated. Then, it will present six recommendations for future action that can be drawn from this human rights-centric research. Finally, this section will include an infographic depicting this history, which can be disseminated widely.

A History of U.S. Human Rights Violations in the RMI

Timeline of Human Rights Promises and Violations

The Marshall Islands were designated a trust territory under the administering authority of the United States by the UN Security Council in 1947, a resolution approved by the U.S. on 16 July 1947. Under the terms of this resolution, the U.S. was entrusted with “fostering the development of political institutions, promoting economic, social and educational advancement, and moving the Trust Territory towards self-governance” and further “to protect the land, resources, and health of Micronesia’s inhabitants.”⁷² By this time the United States had already begun their nuclear testing program in Bikini Atoll.

On December 10, 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. Drafted in response to the atrocities of WWII, the UDHR was a collective task by a committee consisting of prominent figures from many nations, and headed by Eleanor Roosevelt of the United States. Much of the UDHR is based off of U.S. founding documents and reflects American ideals, such as democracy and freedom of speech. The majority of international human rights law today can be traced back to this document. While not legally binding, adoption of the UDHR was a declaration by the U.S. and other members of the United Nations to uphold the rights granted within.

On March 1, 1954, just over five years after the U.S. adopted the UDHR, its military forces detonated the nuclear test bomb “Castle Bravo” on Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands. This event, as the largest detonation in an era of U.S. nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands, directly violated the human rights of the Marshallese in a number of significant ways and proved the U.S.’s commitment to human rights only went so far as it served their interests.

Resistance

On May 6, 1954, the Marshallese filed a petition with UN Trusteeship Council, voicing concerns about the nuclear testing program and requesting that it no longer be permitted on the grounds of protecting the people from dislocation and health hazards. However, the tests continued as the U.S. claimed their necessity for international security,⁷³ and the Marshallese filed another petition on March 9, 1956. Despite these efforts, the U.S. continued their nuclear testing program until 1958, detonating a total of 67 nuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands.⁷⁴

Right to Life and Adequate Standards of Living

⁷² Georgescu, Calin, “Report of the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes,” A/HRC/21/48/Add.1, Geneva, 2012, 4.

⁷³ Ibid., 10.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 5.

Radioactive fallout and continued exposure to environments contaminated by radiation have caused lasting health issues among many Marshallese. This worsening of health due to the nuclear bomb testing constitutes a violation of the most basic human rights attributed by the UDHR: the right to life (Article 3).

Aside from the extreme consequence of death, (which is difficult to trace due to debate over which health issues are caused by radiation exposure from nuclear testing and which occur naturally) the clear decrease in quality of life for the Marshallese is another severe result of the testing program. Under UDHR Article 25, all peoples have the right to an adequate standard of living for health and well-being. This right is further expanded upon under Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic and Social and Cultural Rights, which states that all humans have the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, and housing. While the U.S. has not ratified this treaty, it is an important source of international human rights standards, and the U.S. government would clearly be in violation of this treaty were it to ratify the document.

During both their period of displacement and following their return back to their radioactively contaminated islands, the residents of Bikini and Rongelap suffered inadequate living conditions which proved harmful to their well-being and health. Upon displacement to the island of Rongerik, Bikinians suffered near starvation due to lack of resources, and hardly fared much better in following moves to Kwajalein and Kili which offered inadequate accommodations to sustain their previous quality of life.⁷⁵ Rongelapese experienced similar displacement. Ultimately, the U.S. deemed the islands safe to return to, despite large amounts of radiation on the island,⁷⁶ contaminating traditional food sources and further exposing Marshallese to radiation. Both communities have since been displaced again from their homelands to protect their health, but the U.S. continues to insist that Rongelap is safe for inhabitation.

This displacement, caused by U.S. nuclear testing, and the poor substitutes of small islands with inadequate resources, violates the rights of Bikinians and Rongelapese to an adequate standard of living for health and well-being.

Right to Land

Under UDHR Article 17,⁷⁷ all humans have a right to property, of which they cannot be arbitrarily deprived. After being evacuated from their home islands, the people of Rongelap and Bikini were denied access to their ancestral lands to which they held property rights and accessed

⁷⁵ Georgescu, 4-5.

⁷⁶ Georgescu, 5.

⁷⁷ UN General Assembly, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," 217 (III) A (Paris, 1948), <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/> (accessed January 16, 2017).

their means of subsistence. While their evacuation was necessary for their health, it would not have been so if not for U.S. nuclear testing, the repercussions of which were not made to be fully understood by the Marshallese beforehand. Furthermore recent international accords reveal additional harms done by these Cold War-era actions. Under the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 26(1) grants the right of indigenous peoples “to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.” Under Article 26(3) the state, in this case the US, had the obligation to give protection to these land and resources, which they clearly did not.

In the case of the Marshallese, land is tied to culture and society in an integral way.⁷⁸ To separate the Marshallese from their land by making that land unlivable effectively changed the way Marshallese interact within their communities and the extent to which they can practice their culture. Importantly, the Marshallese have a matrilineal society⁷⁹, and women benefit from holding land rights to validate their high position in society. Removal of the people from their traditional homeland has altered the societal order. This disconnection from land thus violates article 15(a) of the ICESCR which grants the right to take part in cultural life. The Marshallese have thus lost aspects of their indigenous way of life, and it is difficult to say whether this can ever be restored as new generations grow up detached from their land and culture.

Right to Health

The detonation of Bravo caused immediate health consequences for the Marshallese, who were not evacuated from nearby islands beforehand. They suffered extreme burns, hair loss, finger discoloration, nausea, and other symptoms caused by their exposure to radiation,⁸⁰ and received dosages at a much higher level than any human naturally encounters in their lifespan. Exposure continued and was widespread across the islands due to living in radiation contaminated environments. Long-term health issues have since been reported in the community, including a wide variety of cancers and birth defects.⁸¹ While there is much dispute about the effects of radiation exposure to human health, the UN reports that, “For the purpose of establishing international radiation protection standards, it is assumed that any increase in a dose of radiation, however minute, will result in a proportionate increase in the risk of cancer.”⁸²

⁷⁸ Barker, Holly M. *Bravo for the Marshallese : Regaining Control in a Post-nuclear, Post-colonial World*, 2nd ed. Case Studies on Contemporary Social Issues, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2013, 61.

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰ Georgescu, 6.

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Ibid.

The 1976 International Covenant of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights Article 12(1) grants the right to the “highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.”⁸³ Importantly, this provision includes possible psychological trauma endured by the Marshallese as a violation of their human right to health, along with physical conditions of health, both of which fell below the “highest attainable standard” as a result of the nuclear testing program and subsequent exposure to radiation. Section 2 of the same article states necessary conditions for realization of this standard. Section 2(a) states that steps should be taken reduction of infant mortality, and to further healthy development of the child, in conflict with testimonies of birth defects occurring at a larger frequency following the nuclear testing era conflict with. 2(b) states that steps should be taken for improvement of environmental hygiene, whereas radiation in the land and resources has made the environment hazardous to health. 2(c) states that steps should be taken for prevention and treatment, neither of which were adequately done by the U.S. during nuclear testing or today. Prevention could have meant greater precautions taken to limit exposure such as timelier evacuation, or through less or no nuclear testing in the first place. After detonating many test bombs, the U.S. has provided some treatment, but it is insufficient and is offered only to a narrow subset of the “affected” population, those present on the islands during Bravo’s detonation. Critically, this excludes descendants who were not alive during nuclear testing, but suffer from genetic passage of radiation and coinciding illness.

Finally, 2(d) provides for assurance of medical service and attention for all who need it. Assuming, as has been stated, that each dose of radiation equals an equal increase in possibility of cancer,⁸⁴ then the nuclear testing program’s exposure of the Marshallese to radiation has caused an upsurge in cancer patients, which the Marshall Islands is not properly equipped to service.⁸⁵ While the Marshall Islands have plans for cancer control program, they are hampered by capacity and resource constraints, lack of skilled personnel, transport, and pharmaceuticals. To properly provide for this right the Marshallese need greater assistance from the U.S. and the U.S. has a responsibility to fill this need as the agent who created the need for such robust health institutions.

Recognizing that health constitutes more than disease, the right to health also includes more general provisions. As stated by the UN, “The right to health is an inclusive right that extends to the underlying determinants of health, such as access to an adequate supply of safe food and to safe and potable water.”⁸⁶ Radiation in the environment of the Marshall Islands has led to contamination of the local and traditional food sources, as well as high radiation in the water supply, restricting access to clean water. Ingesting these leads to further exposure and risk of health issues. Because of this, the Marshallese now chiefly rely on imported foods. However, this change in diet has led to yet

⁸³UN General Assembly. “International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.” 2200A (XXI). New York, 1976. Access January 16, 2017 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx> 4.

⁸⁴ Georgescu, 6.

⁸⁵Ibid., 14.

⁸⁶ Georgescu, 8.

another health issue: a high incidence of diabetes from consuming unhealthy food imports,⁸⁷ which are typically high in salt and sugar. Ultimately, the exposure of the Marshallese and their land to radiation has made it difficult for them to attain even a minimal standard of health, let alone the highest standard of health and well-being.

It is clear that the U.S. government has underestimated the full effects of radiation exposure. While the United States clings to lack of scientific evidence as reasoning for restrictive policies for Marshallese healthcare, “a precautionary approach that emphasizes the likelihood of risk over conclusive proof may prove more prudent and protective of rights.”⁸⁸ Therefore a shift in U.S. policy is needed which will place the rights of the Marshallese above what the U.S. government deems scientifically proven or unproven.

Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment: Project 4.1

Marshallese testimonies have revealed sentiments that the United States government was using them as “guinea pigs”,⁸⁹ purposefully exposing them to radiation and then subjecting them to medical testing. The Marshallese believe this medical attention served the purpose of testing how the human body reacts to radiation poisoning in various forms, rather than to provide cures or treatments for radiation exposure. It is possible that this project, known as Project 4.1, can be taken as an example of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, in direct violation of Article 5 of the UDHR. In treating the Marshallese as scientific testing subjects without their knowledge or consent, the United States failed to treat them with the dignity which the UDHR attributes to all human beings.

Further, the notion that “survivors of nuclear tests alleg[ed] that they were conducted without their prior and informed consent”⁹⁰ which is in direct violation of Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. This article broad provides for right to not be subjected to “cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment,” but further specifies, “In particular, no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.”⁹¹ While it cannot be proved that Marshallese were purposefully exposed to radiation, it does seem that “consent for medical tests to monitor human health appears to have neither been sought nor

⁸⁷Ibid., 14.

⁸⁸Ibid., 15.

⁸⁹Barker, 57.

⁹⁰Georgescu, 13.

⁹¹UN General Assembly. “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.” 2200A (XXI). New York, 1976. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx> 5.

obtained.”⁹² Despite the motives of the treatment, it is clear that, from the point of the Marshallese who received medical treatment that it was done in a degrading, secretive, and insensitive manner.⁹³

Concerns that Bravo was deliberate for the purposes of testing effects of radiation from nuclear testing on Marshallese have created a relationship between the Marshallese and the U.S. government predicated by distrust. Marshallese individuals who received medical attention have been denied access to their own medical files,⁹⁴ furthering this mistrust and threatening their future health status. Increasing access to information is an imperative to alleviating accusations of purposeful radiation exposure and medical testing, or holding the U.S. government responsible if these accusations prove truthful.

Right to Remedy

Lastly, the UDHR grants the right to an effective remedy under Article 8, which the U.S. has failed to provide for many of the previously stated human rights violations, and at times where it did provide remediation to the Marshallese, it was largely insufficient. The people of Bikini brought against the US in *Juda v. United States of America* in order to seek justice for their dislocation from their island for over 35 years. The case was suspended in 1983 due to negotiations of the Compact of Free Association. Following the entry into the compact in 1986, the U.S.’s motion for dismissal of the case was granted. Section 177 of COFA provided that U.S. courts no longer had jurisdiction in the Marshall Islands, meaning: “Marshallese citizens no longer had access to US courts on any other potential and future claims.”⁹⁵ The COFA agreement set up a Nuclear Claims Tribunal and funds to fulfill its rulings. The Tribunal is meant to cover personal injury claims, property damages and remediation. Actual realization of which would require much more endowment than was placed in the fund. Insufficient funds have led to a suspension of award claims.⁹⁶

The provision for changed circumstances under Section 177 of COFA provides for the granting of additional compensatory funds from US, given that new knowledge of damage is discovered after COFA’s implementation, and could not reasonably have been identified when COFA was put into place. Further, it must be determined that inability to provide additional funding would render the agreement “manifestly inadequate.”⁹⁷ Article X of the agreement terminated all current and future legal proceedings against the US or agents related to nuclear testing program. In 2000, the Republic of the Marshall Islands brought a changed circumstance petition to US Congress,

⁹² Georgescu, 13.

⁹³ Barker, 56-57.

⁹⁴ Georgescu, 13.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁹⁷ *Compact of Free Association Act of 1985*. Public Law 99-239. 99th Congress (1986).

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/99/hjres187/text>

bearing little in response. According to Congress, the “petition did not meet the set criteria for changed circumstances and hence there was no legal basis for considering additional funds.”⁹⁸ As of today the petition has been addressed no further by Congress, and the Marshallese attempt to realize their right to effective remediation is at a standstill.

ICCPR Article 2.3 grants the right to an effective remedy for those who have had their rights violated. Importantly, and in conflict with Article X of COFA, this right is granted “notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in official capacity.”⁹⁹ This article also provides for competent authorities to grant remedies and for enforcement of remedies. Further, General Comment 31 of the Human Rights Committee states that “such remedies should be appropriately adapted so as to take into account the special vulnerability of certain categories of persons.”¹⁰⁰ In regard to the ineffectiveness of the Nuclear Claims Tribunal, it is appropriate to state that “in order to give effect to the right to an effective remedy, competent authorities should not only be empowered to make binding decisions but should also have sufficient resources to effect the awards they make.”¹⁰¹

Recommendations

_____ We understand that the U.S. government will continue its historical position of denying additional responsibility for the wrongs described here. The U.S. government may even believe that it has responded sufficiently. Nevertheless, we understand that there are many Marshallese citizens and their allies who hold a very different views of the on-going and intergenerational harms of U.S. nuclear colonialism. In the hope of providing those advocates and allies with some ethical leverage in current and future efforts we offer the following recommendations.

1. In order to help restore quality of life, efforts should be made to provide sufficient housing and resources for displaced Marshallese. For the loss of land which remains uninhabitable, appropriate reparations should be provided, including efforts to assist displaced communities in remaining connected to their culture as much as possible.
2. In compliance with the right to the highest attainable health, U.S. health care efforts for Marshallese should be expanded to include the whole of the population rather than the highly restricted subset of currently eligible persons. Additional funding is required to create facilities equipped to handle the growing rate of cancer which is resultant of the nuclear

⁹⁸ Georgescu, 12.

⁹⁹ ICCPR, 3.

¹⁰⁰ Georgescu, 12.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

testing program, and access to healthy and safe food and water should be secured.

3. There is reason to believe that Project 4.1 subjected Marshallese to involuntary participation in medical testing. In accordance with Article 9 of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, there should be an investigation into the issue by the U.S. government, or perhaps, due to conflicting interests, a third party court.
4. In accordance with the investigation, the United States government should release any information pertaining to Project 4.1, and be in otherwise full compliance with the investigation. For the purpose of the investigation, Article X of the COFA agreement should be waived, allowing for legal proceedings against the US and agents of the nuclear testing program.
5. The U.S. Congress should address the changed circumstances petition brought forth by the Marshallese in line with the obligations of the COFA agreement in order to provide the right to adequate remedy as ruled by the Nuclear Claims Tribunal.
6. Finally, the United States should make an effort to ratify human rights treaties it has thus far neglected in order to renew its commitment to human rights and allow for increased accountability to uphold them.

KNOW YOUR HISTORY

Human Rights Violations by the United States in the Marshall Islands and Marshallese Efforts to Hold the U.S. Accountable

OPERATION CROSSROADS

The United States commences their nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands on Bikini Atoll, requiring displacement of its inhabitants from their traditional land.

1946

BEGINNING OF TRUSTEESHIP

The Marshall Islands are designated a trust territory under the U.S. Administering Authority in UN Security Council resolution 21. U.S. entrusted to protect the land, resources, and health of inhabitants.

1947

UDHR ADOPTED BY UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the U.S. and other members of the General Assembly declare a commitment to upholding human rights.

1948

DETONATION OF CASTLE BRAVO

On March 1, 1954, The United States detonated the largest atomic bomb in the Marshall Islands, on Bikini Atoll, violating many human rights from the time of detonation on.

1954

RESISTANCE

Twice, the Marshallese filed petitions with UN Trusteeship Council, voicing concerns about the nuclear testing program such as hazards to health and displacement. Testing continued despite Marshallese requests for its end.

1954 & 1956

END OF NUCLEAR TESTING PROGRAM

Despite earlier efforts by the Marshallese, the testing program continued until 1958. A total of 67 nuclear weapons were detonated by the US in the Marshall Islands.

1958

PETITIONING THE UNITED NATIONS

The Compact of Free Association ended the Trusteeship, offered some financial assistance from the United States, and removed US jurisdiction in the Marshall Islands, meaning Marshallese citizens lost access to US courts to make claims.

1986

The RMI brought a petition of changed circumstances to the US Congress in order to claim additional funds, as outlined in the COFA agreement. It was dismissed and has yet to be further addressed.

2000

END OF TRUSTEESHIP WITH COFA AGREEMENT

PETITION OF CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES

TODAY

LASTING EFFECTS

DISPLACEMENT

Many Marshallese have been displaced by the nuclear testing program and the continued radioactive contamination of their land, which has consequences for their quality of life and ability to participate in cultural life.

Radiation exposure has caused many health issues in the Marshallese community, and inadequate remedy has been offered to means for adequate health care. Safe water and food sources are also restricted due to radiation.

HEALTH

EXPERIMENTATION

In Project 4.1, medical procedures were conducted on Marshallese without consent. There is reason to believe this treatment was not for the wellbeing of the patients but rather for increased scientific understanding of radiation effects on humans.

Georgescu, Calin. "Report of the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes." A/HRC/21/48/Add.1. Geneva, 2012. <https://daccess-ods.un.org/TMP/9016588.33026886.html>

Weaving RMI History into U.S. Education *through* Curricula and Commemoration

Lauren Butrim, Cole DeGideo, James Kim, Ian Snyder, and Sarah Tripi

Tell Them - Kathy Jetnil Kijiner

[...]

*Wear these earrings
to parties
to your classes and meetings
to the grocery store, the corner store
and while riding the bus
Store jewelry, incense, copper coins
and curling letters like this one
in this basket
and when others ask you
where you got this
you tell them*

they're from the Marshall Islands

*show them where it is on a map
tell them we are a proud people
toasted dark brown as the carved ribs
of a tree stump
tell them we are descendents
of the finest navigators in the world
tell them our islands were dropped
from a basket
carried by a giant
tell them we are the hollow hulls
of canoes as fast as the wind
slicing through the pacific sea [...]*



“Marshallese women weaving baskets.”

Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner’s poem *Tell Them* and the image depicting Marshallese master weavers both demonstrate the rich culture, advanced skills and beautiful traditions of the Marshallese. *Tell Them* in particular captures what we in the education subgroup hope to help accomplish. We want our peers and community members to be able to appreciate Marshallese culture and history as we have begun to. Learning from another community and culture is the start to forging a strong relationship that can learn from and help one another.

Introduction

At the beginning of this Task Force, our instructor, Tony Lucero, asked how many people in our 19-person group had heard of the nuclear testing program conducted by the U.S. government on the Marshall Islands prior to reading Holly Barker’s book *Bravo for the Marshallese*. Only 5 people had previously heard of the nuclear weapons testing program. After reading *Bravo for the Marshallese*, however, everyone in this group has realized the value in being allies to the Marshallese people. Before this Task Force, we were largely unexposed to the history of U.S. nuclear colonialism in the Marshall Islands. But because of this Task Force, we have become more educated on that history, and have aspired to become active, informed advocates for issues that pertain to the Marshallese in our own communities.

Through our own experiences, we have seen how education can be an extremely effective tool in cultivating allies for the Marshallese in areas like health care and reparations. Thus, we have

created tools intended to catalyze change in the formal history curricula of the State of Washington and at our own institution, the University of Washington. We have also crafted tools in order to establish a Day of Commemoration (based on the Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day recognized in the Republic of the Marshall Islands on March 1st) as a way to inform the general public in Washington State. By initiating these changes in our own state and at our own University, we hope to create a template that other states and universities could employ to better integrate knowledge of the U.S. role in the RMI into formal educational curricula.

We have created a collection of facts and figures to use while addressing politicians and professors in the pursuit of curriculum changes. Our hope is that this information can act as an initial argument for why the inclusion of Marshallese history is important in our state and our university. The research we have conducted is provided below.

Pacific Islanders in the Education System

Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI), among whom the Marshallese people are included, are one of the fastest growing racial groups in the United States.¹⁰² The cities of Spokane, Everett, and Tacoma in Washington State contain 73,213 Pacific Islanders, many of whom are from the Marshall Islands.¹⁰³ In Spokane public schools, the number of students whose primary language is Marshallese is second only to Russian-speaking students, illustrating the impressive size of the Marshallese population in that city.¹⁰⁴ However, the current lack of Marshallese history within our schools, (in combination with institutional discrimination, and a financial aid system that is difficult to access) has created a hostile education environment for NHPI students, and has resulted in underserved NHPI students by our educational institutions.

Studies have indicated that only 18% of adult NHPI people are degree holders.¹⁰⁵ A study by the Department of Education found that only 29% of Pacific Islanders between the ages of 18 and 24 were enrolled in a university or college, while 39% of Caucasians, and 59% of Asians were enrolled in colleges or universities.¹⁰⁶ Pacific Islanders are also half as likely to graduate with a Bachelor's degree as those of Asian descent.¹⁰⁷ This comparison holds great significance as Pacific Islanders have been historically grouped in a broader "Asian" categorization, often disguising the reality of the institutional negligence of U.S. education systems towards the Marshallese.¹⁰⁸ The high

¹⁰² National Center for Education Statistics. Digest of Education Statistics. (2011)

¹⁰³ Sowa, Tom. "Marshallese Making A New Life In Spokane". *The Spokesman-Review*. 2012.
<http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2012/mar/04/marshallese-making-a-new-life-in-spokane/>

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Asian Americans Advancing Justice. "Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the United States: A Community of Contrasts 2014." *Meius.org*. Accessed February 14, 2016.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ "What you should know about the native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders." White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/list/asian-americans-initiative/what-you-should-know.pdf>.

¹⁰⁸ Asian Pacific Institute on Gender Based Violence, "Census Data and API Identities," Accessed Feb. 26, 2017, <http://www.api-gbv.org/resources/census-data-api-identities.php>.

financial costs of achieving a Bachelor's degree may explain this gap. 73% of Marshallese people living in the U.S. are categorized as being low-income, 49% live in poverty, meaning that Marshallese populations have the lowest per capita income of any racial or ethnic group within the United States.¹⁰⁹ The Census Bureau reported that 17.6% of Pacific Islanders lived below the poverty line, compared to a national poverty rate of 11.7% for Asians, and 11.6% for Caucasians, thus making it more difficult for Pacific Islanders to be able to access institutions of higher education.¹¹⁰

Marshallese and Pacific Islanders: Absent from the Curriculum, Struggling in Class

Another barrier facing NHPI students in the realm of education is the issue of marginalization. Studies have shown that the largest impediment to student engagement in both college-level and K-12 education is a feeling of being isolated.¹¹¹ A study conducted in 2000 found that this alienation affects “to the greatest extent among middle school students ... followed by elementary and high school student[s].”¹¹² In order to address their alienation from the curricula, K-12 schools and colleges could include teachings related to Marshallese culture as well as a more in-depth and complete history of the Marshall Islands as it relates to the United States.

While the inclusion of the Marshall Islands in our curriculum helps combat some of the issues of alienation for Marshallese students, it also helps educate non-Marshallese people about the nuclear legacy of the U.S. This could open dialogue to a broader range of people about the historical relationship between the U.S. and the Marshall Islands.

For these reasons, a curriculum change that would include NHPI histories broadly, and Marshallese history specifically, could help to increase engagement by NHPI students in their education. This curriculum change should occur on two levels: for public K-12 schools, and for public institutions of higher education within Washington State, specifically at the University of Washington.

Statewide, K-12 Curriculum Change

One example of a curriculum change that has already occurred within Washington State is the mandatory teaching of tribal histories in K-12 classrooms. Current history curriculum generally has a Eurocentric bias as it fails to include the histories of Native Americans.¹¹³ Washington State is

¹⁰⁹ Asian Americans Advancing Justice. http://www.meius.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/A_Community_of_Contrasts_NHPI_US_2014-1.pdf

¹¹⁰ National Education Association. A report on the status of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Education: Beyond the “Model Minority” Stereotype. (2005).

¹¹¹ Marks, Helen M. "Student engagement in instructional activity: Patterns in the elementary, middle, and high school years." *American educational research journal* 37, no. 1 (2000): 153-184.

¹¹² Marks, Helen M. "Student engagement in instructional activity: Patterns in the elementary, middle, and high school years." *American educational research journal* 37, no. 1 (2000): 153-184.

¹¹³ Brownstone, S. Teaching Tribal History Is Finally Required in Washington Public Schools. *The Stranger*. (2015). Accessed February 09, 2017 <http://www.thestranger.com/news/feature/2015/06/24/22438654/teaching-tribal-history-is-finally-required-in-washington-public-schools>

only the second state in the U.S. to mandatorily include tribal histories in their teachings. This was done to inform students of the diverse national and tribal histories that exist within the United States.¹¹⁴

However, the inclusion of Native American studies in the curriculum was not met with adequate funding and so its implementation has proven to be difficult. In order to create meaningful curriculum changes, the inclusion of the Marshallese history must be met with funding either from the U.S. government, or a third party organization. Formalizing the teaching of the histories of NHPI, and Marshallese people in particular in Washington State schools (as was done with the histories of Native Americans in Washington State) would empower and enhance the understanding of the students and the society at large.¹¹⁵ It would act to curb the disparities that the Washington Marshallese population experiences in education by acknowledging Marshallese history, culture, and people.

To advocate for an incorporation of Marshallese history into Washington State curricula, our team has created two tools. The first, a broad script that can be utilized in contacting representatives about K-12 curriculum changes. The second is a directory of Washington state representatives who play key roles in dealing with our particular state's educational system. While the directory is specific to Washington State, the script provided can be used nationwide.

¹¹⁴ National Education Association. A report on the status of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Education: Beyond the "Model Minority" Stereotype. (2005).

¹¹⁵ Brownstone, S.

Script for Curriculum changes in Washington State

Below is a script that can be altered and used in a variety of states to push for the inclusion of Marshallese history into the curriculum.

Hello, my name is _____ and I am one of your constituents from _____. I am calling in hopes that I may speak to you about the history curriculum in our public schools. Between the years of 1946 and 1958 the United States conducted a nuclear testing program on the Marshall Islands. The testing of nuclear weapons is not only an integral part of U.S. history, but its presence on the Marshall Islands is also an example of U.S. colonialism around the world. The people of the Marshall Islands have been met by vast injustices and their stories are critical in our understanding of the world, and our world history. I would love to work with you and encourage you to include the history of the Marshall Islands into our state's curriculum. Thank you for your time.

Washington State Representatives

Below is a list of representatives that can be contacted in Washington State regarding this issue. The House Education Committee considers issues relating to kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) education.

- 236A John L. O'Brien, P.O. Box 40600, Olympia, WA 98504-0600 Committee Hearings & Bill Information: (360) 786-7183 Legislative Hotline Operators: 1-800-562-6000

There are a variety of politicians that can be contacted in order to revise the Washington State level curriculum to include topics about the Marshallese people.

- Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos (206) 587-5549
- 37th District
 - *Represents Rainier Valley, Rainier Beach, Columbia City, North Beacon Hill, Mt. Baker, Leschi, Madrona, Skyway and part of Beacon Hill and Renton.*
 - Sharon Tomiko Santos (D)
 - Eric Pettigrew (D)
- 1st District
 - *Represents part of northeast King County and south Snohomish County, including areas of Kirkland, Bothell, Mountlake Terrace and Brier.*
 - Derek Stanford (D)
 - Shelley Kloba (D)
- 3rd District
 - *Represents the heartland of the downtown Spokane area, extending to the North Side and South Hill.*
 - Marcus Riccelli (D)
 - Timm Ormsby (D)
- 11th District
 - *Represents part of South Seattle, Tukwila and the southern part of Renton.*
 - Zack Hudgins (D)
 - Steve Bergquist (D)
- 23rd District

- *Represents part of Kitsap County, including Bainbridge Island, Poulsbo, Kingston, Silverdale, Winslow and East Bremerton.*
- Sherry Appleton (D)
- Drew Hansen (D)

College Level Curriculum

Marginalization of NHPI students on the university level can be combated, in part, through creating area studies programs and curricula that better incorporate NHPI histories and heritages in the fabric of the university. While the University of Washington, as with many state institutions, likes to nominally show support for inclusivity and diversity, the UW-Seattle does not have a single Pacific Islander--not to mention Marshallese--faculty member. In addition, no Marshallese students attend the University of Washington.

Although the creation of an Oceania and Pacific Islander Studies Minor at the University of Washington, housed in the Department of American Indian Studies, is a step in the right direction, there is still more to be done. With the exception of courses offered by Professor Holly Barker in anthropology, no classes or departments within related fields, such as our own Jackson School, have classes directly related to Marshallese history, or culture, with the exception of this Task Force. There is little currently being done by the UW Administration to attract Marshallese students, which is shocking considering that Washington State has the 3rd largest Marshallese population of any state in the country. However, our Task Force attempts to solve a small portion of this lack of representation by proposing curriculum updates to relevant classes.

Changes in UW Curriculum

As students in the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies (JSIS), we were surprised by the fact that we had not studied the U.S. nuclear weapons testing program in the Marshall Islands, or its repercussions before this Task Force. We therefore decided to make sure that this nuclear weapons testing was incorporated in the entry-level courses of our major, so that future JSIS students will not be ignorant of this crucial history.

To this end, we have created a proposal to the professors of 201: The Making of the 21st Century, a required course in the Jackson School. This course focuses on the three world orders and how the implementation of political, economic, cultural and military frameworks in the name of peace, security and democracy have resulted in “disastrous consequences.”¹¹⁶ It is our belief that the relationship between the United States and the Marshall Islands fits into this course description.

The following tool consists of a letter on behalf of our Task Force that will be sent to professors Joel Migdal, David Bachman, Tony Lucero and Resat Kesaba of the Jackson School.

¹¹⁶ “The Making of the 21st Century,” <https://jsis.washington.edu/course/jsis-201-the-making-of-the-21st-century/>

Included in the letter are suggestions on how to best integrate the story of the Marshall Islands into the JSIS 201 course.

First, we propose setting a day aside to discuss Nuclear Colonialism in its entirety. This day would give a brief history of the U.S. trust relationship with the RMI, the nuclear weapons testing program (and the “Castle Bravo” test in particular), Project 4.1, and the repercussions of the nuclear testing program.

Since the University of Washington is on the quarter system, everything that is usually taught in a 6 month semester-length period is pushed down to a mere 10 weeks. Due to this highly compressed time frame, we have suggested that if professors are unable to set aside an entire day to discuss nuclear colonialism in the context of the RMI, that they integrate the story of the Marshallese through the lens of other, broader, thematic topics. These topics could include the relationship between the Global North and the Global South, the origins and early development of the Cold War, or the decolonization and independence movements of the 20th century. All of these are themes that are already present in the JSIS 201 course curriculum.

We hope that by making students in the Jackson School aware of the history of the Marshall Islands, students will be inspired to learn more and get involved in Marshallese advocacy.

This letter can be altered to be sent to various professors in schools across the country, as well as other departments at the University of Washington, including Law, Societies, and Justice, Political Science, Geography, Anthropology, and History departments.

We believe that it is important to teach and to learn about the U.S. nuclear testing program and its ramifications on the Marshall Islands. The first step in bringing justice to the Marshallese is making the world aware of this issue.

Letter to Faculty Members

Professors,

My name is _____ and I am reaching out to you on behalf of my Task Force: Nuclear Colonialism: Re-examining US Obligations to the Marshall Islands. We have spent our quarter studying the consequences of U.S. military nuclear testing on the Marshall Islands, and creating “tools” to bring awareness and address injustices that have been imposed upon the Marshallese and their land. Between the years of 1946 and 1958 The U.S. military tested nuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands and conducted radiation experiments on its people. These nuclear tests have not only resulted in the displacement of thousands of people who have lost their ancestral lands and traditions, but have also led to multiple health issues related to radiation exposure.

As a group of 19 seniors in the Jackson School we were shocked by what we had learned, but were even more surprised by the fact that the majority of us had never studied these tests in school. Nuclear weapons are an integral part of U.S. history. They have not only changed how we view war and weapons, but also altered global relationships and, according to some scholars, created a tense peace during the Cold War. What we forget to mention when discussing the role of the nuclear weapons, however, is the harm that was caused during the development of these weapons. The U.S. government chose to test its nuclear bomb and experiment on humans in the Marshall Islands, making Marshallese people and their land victims to a particular brand of colonialism-- nuclear colonialism. This is a story that is not often told, but is integral to any critical understanding of the historical period of the Cold War.

With the full support of my task force and our professors Tony Lucero and Holly Barker, we urge you to consider implementing the story of the Marshallese in your course JSIS 201- The Making of The 21st Century. The course description states

“over the course of the last hundred years (or so), there have been numerous attempts to impose economic, political, military, and cultural frameworks in the name of various ideals like peace, security, democracy, and development.

Many of those attempts have led to disastrous consequences.”

It is our belief that Nuclear Colonialism fits this description as nuclear tests as large as 1,000 times bigger than Nagasaki and Hiroshima were tested in inhabited lands in the name of peace, security and the stability of the United States.

I have attached a proposed insert for a syllabus including readings in hopes that you will consider my proposition. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further please do not hesitate to reach out to me, or to our Task Force professors.

Thank you for your time,

Student in Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies.

Proposed Syllabus Insertion

Nuclear Colonialism and its Effects after WWII

This week we will be examining the purpose and the effects of Nuclear Colonialism in the Pacific Islands. Bikini Atoll, the “Castle Bravo” test, the effects of radiation and relocation.

Questions to consider: What role does the Nuclear Bomb have in the creation of the second world order? How does Nuclear Colonialism exemplify “the West and the Rest”? What would ____ say about Nuclear Colonialism in the Marshall Islands? Could the nuclear weapons testing program in the Marshall Islands be considered a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

Suggested Readings:

- Bravo for The Marshallese by Holly Barker - chapters 2&3
- Domination and Resistance: the United States and the Marshall Islands during the Cold War by Martha Smith-Norris - chapter 1 & epilogue
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (entire)
 - Reading the UDHR in the context of the nuclear weapons testing program could be a critical way to “talk-back” to the dominant narrative of the “progress” of “developed” nations.

Please consider discussing the topic while teaching:

- The Conflict between the Global North and Global South
- The Origins and Early Development of the Cold War
- Decolonization, independence, and the appearance of the 3rd world
 - The Republic of the Marshall Islands gained independence in 1986

Results of this Outreach

As of Spring quarter 2017, a section on U.S. Nuclear Colonialism will be taught in JSIS 201: The Making of the 21st Century, as part of the exploration of the Cold War. Professor Tony Lucero has created this agenda:

- In-class screening of *Nuclear Savage: The Islands of Secret Project 4.1* (Director: Adam Jonas Horowitz)
- Guest lecture by Professor Holly Barker, Anthropology and Burke Museum: "From Godzilla to Sponge Bob: Nuclear Weapons in the Popular Imagination"
- Aaron Weiner, “America’s Real Migrant Crisis is the One You Have Never Heard Of,” *Mother Jones*, Dec. 29, 2016. <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2016/12/hawaii-micronesia-migration-homeless-climate-change>
- 1954 Report to the Scientific Director, Operation Castle—Final Report Project 4.1. Study of Response of Human Beings Accidentally Exposed to Significant Fallout Radiation. http://worf.eh.doe.gov/data/ihp2/2776_.pdf,

However, it is not enough to simply have Marshallese people be better represented in our university's curriculum. Therefore, we have also created a scholarship proposal tool to enable more Marshallese students to have the financial incentive to come to the University of Washington.

Scholarship Proposal for a Marshallese PhD Student

There are currently no scholarship opportunities specifically for the Marshallese community of Washington, like there are for other minority groups in Washington or nation-wide. With such a low percentage of Marshallese students reaching college level education, the establishment of a scholarship aimed at supporting Marshallese students would help to reduce the barriers they face in accessing higher education. A case statement is an important tool for gaining funding and support for a scholarship. The case statement below can be altered for different foundations and different universities to make a more widespread impact.

Case Statement to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

In the United States, Marshallese Americans fare worse economically than all other racial groups.¹¹⁷ As of 2010, 73% of Marshallese Americans are low-income and 49% -- a near majority -- live in poverty.¹¹⁸ Not only are Marshallese Americans at an economic disadvantage, but a study done between the years 2006 to 2010 has shown that only 3% of the Marshallese population in the United States have attained a bachelor's degree.¹¹⁹ This educational and economic disproportionality originates from the position that many Marshallese have been put in due to the effects of the U.S. nuclear testing on the Marshall Islands between 1946 and 1958. Forced to migrate to the U.S. to seek competent treatment for a variety of diseases spawning from radiation exposure, many families find it difficult to support the cost of living, let alone higher education for their children.¹²⁰

However, the Marshallese are not passive. As a community they engage in advocacy efforts to seek medical care and environmental restoration, to educate the world about their history, to restore those in exile to their homes and to resist government efforts to ignore the damages of the nuclear testing.¹²¹ Marshallese youth are a large component of this advocacy. Their strong bonds to their culture and history of displacement have prompted youth rallies and increasing vocalization about climate change.¹²² This type of proactive leadership, critical and global thinking, and rich cultural knowledge is exactly what the Jackson School of International Studies and the University of Washington is looking for in a PhD student.

¹¹⁷ Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Aaron Wiener, "America's Real Migrant Crisis is the One You've Never Heard Of," *MotherJones.com*, Last modified Dec. 29, 2016, <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2016/12/hawaii-micronesia-migration-homeless-climate-change>.

¹²¹ Barker, Bravo for the Marshallese.

¹²² Abadi, Mark. "Thousands of 'Climate Refugees' Could Be Soon Heading to this Middle America Town," *BusinessInsider.com*, Last modified Feb. 5, 2016. <http://www.businessinsider.com/marshallese-climate-refugees-head-to-arkansas-2016-2>.

The unfortunate economic position of many Marshallese youth and their difficulties accessing higher education matches the goals of your organization - the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and reflects many of the current projects that you have undertaken. Your organization not only seeks to heal racial inequities but also focuses on enabling vulnerable youth to achieve great success in school, work and life.¹²³ By sponsoring a scholarship with the Jackson School of International Studies to encourage Marshallese students attaining PhDs would not only help close the inequities preventing Marshallese from reaching higher education, but would also give hope to those at a lower level of education.

While it is important to do work within our own Jackson School of International Studies community, it is also important to expand this knowledge beyond a university setting. The following tool can be used to raise awareness among the general public.

Raising Awareness through a Day of Commemoration: Establishing March 1st as Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day in Washington State

Commemorative days have historically served more than just a simple memorial or celebratory function. These days, which give official acknowledgement to a particular group or historical event, have the unique ability to highlight the struggles, the sacrifices, the resiliency and the dedication of a group or individual.

In the RMI, the Marshallese commemorate Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day to remember those lost and affected by the “Castle Bravo” test on March 1, 1954. Common activities held by Marshallese communities include “speeches, multimedia and artistic performances, and oral histories by survivors, scholars, cultural leaders, and government representatives.”¹²⁴ There is also a distinct emphasis of the recognition of this day in schools as a way to ensure that future generations do not forget the impact of the testing, the ways in which the testing altered Marshallese culture, and their roles in Marshallese culture. In one celebration, “youth representatives [...met] in the capital Majuro for a week of digital storytelling workshops centered around Nuclear Survivors Day,”¹²⁵ showing the global nature of this commemorative day. On another occasion, several high school “classes went on a field trip to participate in the Nuclear Victims Day 2006 activities [...], where students put together displays.”¹²⁶ The students documented their visit in a video, displaying models of the Bravo test, photo exhibitions of victims and survivors of the test, and the students had the opportunity to sign an anti-nuclear petition.¹²⁷ In these ways, the March 1 Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day by

¹²³ W.K. Kellogg Foundation, “What We Do,” *WKKF.org*, Accessed February 26, 2017, <http://www.wkkf.org/what-we-do/overview>.

¹²⁴ “Nuclear Remembrance Day 2014,” *Meius.org*, Accessed February 14, 2017, <http://www.meius.org/nrd/>.

¹²⁵ “Nuclear Survival Day Conference Brings Together World Youth to Marshall Islands,” *ABC.net*, Last modified February 28, 2014, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-02-28/an-marshall-island-youth-nuclear-survivor-day-conference/5290904>.

¹²⁶ “Nuclear Victims Day Feb 28, 2006 – Majuro, Marshall Islands,” Filmed Feb. 2006, YouTube video, 6:40, Posted Sept. 2007, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wmr98MtyZfU>.

¹²⁷ “Nuclear Victims Day Feb 28,2006 – Majuro, Marshall Islands”

the RMI serves as a conduit to continue educating younger generations about the history of the Bravo test, and is an inspiring model that can be used to establish a Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day here in the U.S.

Although Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day in the RMI is remembered on a day chosen for its particular significance in Marshallese history, the generalized name of the commemorative day broadens the recognition to include those outside of Marshallese communities. By referring to the day as Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day, the day is extended to many other communities and populations who have been affected by nuclear weaponry and warfare. In the RMI, Japanese people are often included in the Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day activities and memorials because of their history with nuclear warfare. In one of the youth events mentioned above, students came not only from Islands within the RMI but also “from other nuclear-affected areas including Japan and Kazakhstan.”¹²⁸ In one speech by former Marshall Islands foreign minister Tony de Brum on March 1, 2016, the minister addressed the Japanese by saying, “To our brothers and sisters in Japan, the people of the Marshall Islands stand with you in your efforts to stop the spread of nuclear weapons and to ban all development of these terrible devices which threaten us, whether in the military context or in civilian use for power generation.”¹²⁹ The solidarity from a common experience of nuclear bomb exposure, and a day of remembrance which is open to all who have been affected by nuclear weapons creates an opportunity to establish alliances for advocacy efforts in the future.

There are two levels of meaning to a day of commemoration. The first is for the people who are outside of the group being represented and the other is for the people themselves who struggled for the cause. For those who are not a part the group being represented, a day of commemoration acts to raise awareness about the particular histories and struggles of that group. The simple existence of a commemorative day introduces people to an issue or movement that they may not have been previously aware of. It also serves as catalyst to find out more on their own. To have a day recognized at any level of government -- city-wide, state-wide, nation-wide – leads to recognition of the day and the group it represents by social institutions and communities.

One such example of a successful commemorative day is that of Martin Luther King Jr. Day which every year inspires awareness at many levels of education in the U.S. In elementary schools, kids are encouraged to engage in specific activities meant to expose them to the amazing accomplishments, sacrifices and resilience of Dr. King.¹³⁰ Another local example of a powerful commemorative day is the recent change in Seattle from celebrating Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples’ Day. Indigenous Peoples’ Day gives the community a chance to learn “about the history of Columbus and transforming this day into a celebration of indigenous people and a celebration of

¹²⁸ Nuclear Survival Day Conference Brings Together World Youth to Marshall Islands

¹²⁹ Mike Bass, “Bikini Day Remembrance: Former Marshall Islands Foreign Minister Tony de Brum’s Speech,” *PeaceandPlanet.org*. Last modified March 3, 2016. <http://www.peaceandplanet.org/bikini-day-remembrance-former-marshall-islands-foreign-minister-tony-de-brums-speech/>.

¹³⁰ Phil Nast, “Classroom Resources for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Grades K-5,” *Nea.org*. Last accessed January 28, 2017, <http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/mlk-day-gradesK-5.html>.

social justice” which “allows us to make a connection between this painful history and the ongoing marginalization, discrimination and poverty that indigenous communities face to this day.”¹³¹

For those who identify with the group being commemorated, the day becomes a way of validating that group’s identity. The resolution that formally recognized Indigenous Peoples’ Day in Seattle states that “indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of inter alia, their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources.”¹³² It also states that the city “honors the fact that [it] is built upon indigenous peoples’ homelands.”¹³³ Each of these recognitions by a formal state institution combats the invisibility that Indigenous people have felt in the wake of colonialism and the mass atrocities committed against them in the past and present.

To create a day of commemoration and to ensure that it is recognized by government representatives and within social institutions would not only establish Marshallese history in the education of the general population but it would also work towards eradicating some of the invisibility that the Marshallese feel.¹³⁴ In an event held at UW commemorating March 1st in 2016, “a Bikinian elder living in Washington State, [said] he didn’t want to feel invisible or alone on such an important day of grieving and remembering.”¹³⁵ The formal recognition of March 1st and its significance in both U.S. and Marshallese history will be a step towards eradicating that fear of erasure. It would serve not only as a recognition of the Marshallese sacrifices, but also as an apology for the United States’ role in their continuing struggles. Although it is only one day of the year, a day of commemoration would introduce the U.S. public to Marshallese history, culture, and to the gross human rights violations that occurred through the nuclear weapons testing program there. This may ultimately spark a sense of solidarity among the U.S. public with the Marshallese.

Implementation

The preexisting precedent set by the Marshallese people of commemorating March 1st as Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day in the RMI, as well as the versatility of the day to extend to several other communities like the Japanese or veterans, make this model for a day of commemoration a dynamic one.

In the State of Washington, introducing a resolution to state senators, to city mayors and the governor is one of the most effective and efficient ways of creating a commemorative day.

¹³¹ Tristan Ahtone, “Seattle Swaps Columbus Day for ‘Indigenous Peoples’ Day.” *Npr.org*. Last modified October 12, 2014. <http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2014/10/12/354274630/seattle-swaps-columbus-day-for-indigenous-peoples-day>.

¹³² “Resolution 14-3: Recognizing the Second Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples’ Day,” *Seattle.gov*, Last accessed January 28, 2017, <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/SeattleHumanRightsCommission/IndigenousPeoplesDay-SHRC-Reso.pdf>.

¹³³ “Resolution 14-3”

¹³⁴ Jes Phillip, “Not All Pacific Islanders are Hawaiian: Let’s Talk About Micronesia,” *Linkedin.com*, Last modified May 8, 2016, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/all-pacific-islanders-hawaiian-lets-talk-micronesia-jes-phillip>.

¹³⁵ Holly Barker, “Healing and Solidarity with the Marshallese Community,” *Burkemuseum.org*, Last modified March 10, 2016, <http://www.burkemuseum.org/blog/healing-and-solidarity-marshallese-community>.

Presenting a resolution to a state representative, especially those with a strong history of support for immigrant communities like Ed Murray, Jay Inslee, or David Frockt, would introduce the issue to someone who could push for the recognition of the day on an internal level. A resolution can also be adopted on a city-wide level. For cities like Everett or Tacoma with a large Marshallese population, this might be a feasible option. Resolutions are useful as an initial step as they are able to bring the issue to light in a political sense and they can assist in raising support within the state government.

However, a resolution is not legally binding as it does not require schools or other public institutions to recognize the day. A resolution would primarily serve as a declaration of support for the Marshallese. The driving purpose for promoting education of Marshallese history and culture is to cultivate support and solidarity to then extend to other issues such as health care, or human rights. As Dr. Holly Barker explains in *Bravo for the Marshallese*, “facing U.S. responsibilities in the Marshall Islands is not a priority for any constituent group in the United States,”¹³⁶ meaning that U.S. Congress feels very little pressure to address this issue. By spreading awareness about Marshallese history and culture, we are thus cultivating the support of a broader constituency that can aid the Marshallese in pressuring the U.S. government.

In order to access the greater population of Washington State, proposing something more binding like a law which required various institutions to commemorate Marshallese history on March 1 might extend awareness further than a resolution on its own. Although a law creating a commemorative day might seem unorthodox, the process of proposing the law itself can be a way of raising awareness. The initial steps of advertising the initiative to gain support and signatures on petitions will bring awareness. Additionally, the templates we have provided for petitions and the initiative itself can be adjusted to be used in other states and for other causes. If the law does end up being adopted, which as an initiative of no cost to the public might appeal to people, it would ensure that Marshallese history and culture is taught throughout Washington State.

In order to create such a law, an initiative must be proposed to the people of Washington. To qualify to the ballot, the sponsor must “first circulate the complete text of the proposal among voters and obtain a number of legal voter signatures equal to 8% of the number of votes cast for the office of Governor at the last regular gubernatorial election.”¹³⁷ That means that more than 246,372 signatures are required for the State of Washington. If those signatures are acquired, the initiative is put on the ballot and released for a public vote. Included in this report are petition forms that are ready to be used on a city level as well as a state level and a draft of a potential initiative.

¹³⁶ Bravo for the Marshallese.

¹³⁷ Kim Wyman, “Filing Initiatives and Referenda in Washington State,” *SecretaryofState.wa.gov*, Last Modified Feb. 2013, <https://www.sos.wa.gov/assets/elections/initiative%20and%20referenda%20manual.pdf>. 4.

Conclusion

It is time that the U.S. begins to recognize and acknowledge the impacts that the nuclear testing has had on the Marshallese people. This recognition can begin to be realized by adopting Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day on March 1st to promote awareness for the Bravo test and the 66 other tests that had huge impacts on the Marshallese. We also hope to encourage Washington state and others to include Marshallese history within their curriculum to better educate our youth on this missing piece in our classrooms. Additionally, we urge organizations, schools and the government to provide scholarships and scholarship information to Marshallese students. We have created a number of tools to assist in this task including an initiative and a state-wide resolution.



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Marshallese marching on Majuro (3/1/2014)



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Parade of Floats on the RMI (3/1/2001)

¹³⁸ “Radiation, Climate Force Bikini Islanders to Seek US Refuge,” *Phys.org*, Last Modified March 22, 2015, <https://phys.org/news/2015-03-climate-bikini-islanders-refuge.html>.

¹³⁹ “Radiation, Climate Force Bikini Islanders to Seek US Refuge.”

Initiative to the People of Washington State

Initiative Measure No. _____

**STATEWIDE COMMEMORATION OF MARCH 1 NUCLEAR VICTIMS AND
SURVIVORS DAY**

AN ACT Relating to Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day; adding new sections to chapter 28A.230; and creating new sections.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

PART I

INTENT

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. Marshallese history and culture go largely unknown among the general public in Washington State. As a show of solidarity and as a method of promoting educational awareness for the Marshallese, the State will introduce Marshallese history and culture by commemorating March 1 as Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day within our schools.

PART 2

POLICY

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A new section is added to chapter 28A.230 RCW to read as follows: On the first of March, state institutions will recognize Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day. If March 1 does not fall on a school day, the commemoration shall be held on the following Monday.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 28A.230 RCW to read as follows: On March 1, or the Monday following, there shall be presented in each common school as defined in RCW 28A.150.020 educational activities suitable to the observance of Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. A new section is added to chapter 28A.230 RCW to read as follows: The responsibility for the preparation and presentation of the activities approximating at least sixty minutes total shall be with the principal or head teacher of each school in collaboration with Marshallese representatives. Such a program will embrace topics tending to teach the true nature of the nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands.

-- END --

Statewide Resolution

A RESOLUTION relating to Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day; declaring March 1st as Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day in the State of Washington; encouraging other institutions to recognize the Day; and reaffirming the State’s commitment to promote the well-being and growth of Washington’s Marshallese community and all others who have been affected;

WHEREAS, the State of Washington acknowledges its role as a state with the third largest population of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander people¹⁴⁰; and

WHEREAS, the State of Washington recognizes the sacrifices of the Pacific Islander communities during the nuclear testing between 1946 and 1958 and their substantial role in ensuring the security of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the State of Washington also recognizes their continued struggle for recognition under the Compact of Free Association to access healthcare, education and other rights guaranteed to taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, the State of Washington holds a responsibility to oppose systematic racism which perpetuates income inequality, exacerbating disproportionate health, education and social crises; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, THAT:

Section 1. The State of Washington strongly supports the proposition that Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day shall be an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the sacrifices and struggles, as well as the culture and resilience of the Pacific Islander people.

Section 2. The State of Washington encourages other businesses, organizations, schools and public institutions to recognize Nuclear Victims and Survivors Day by engaging with local Marshallese communities and employing resources created by and for the Marshallese.

¹⁴⁰ Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

March 1 Nuclear Survivors and Victims Day

WARNING: Ordinance 94289 provides that it is unlawful for any person:

1. To sign or decline to sign any petition for a City initiative, referendum, or Charter amendment, in exchange for any consideration or gratuity or promise thereof; or
2. To give or offer any consideration or gratuity to anyone to induce him or her to sign or not to sign a petition for a City initiative, referendum, or Charter amendment; or
3. To interfere with or attempt to interfere with the right of any voter to sign or not to sign a petition for a City initiative, referendum, or Charter amendment by threat, intimidation or any other corrupt means or practice; or
4. To sign a petition for a City initiative, referendum, or Charter amendment with any other than his or her true name, or to knowingly sign more than one (1) petition for the same initiative, referendum or Charter amendment measure, or to sign any such petition knowing that he or she is not a registered voter of The City of Seattle.
5. Any person violating any of the above provisions shall upon conviction thereof be punishable by a fine of not more than Five Hundred Dollars

(\$500) or by imprisonment in the City Jail for a period not to exceed six (6) months, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

INITIATIVE PETITION FOR SUBMISISON TO THE PEOPLE

To the City Council of the City of Seattle:
 We, the undersigned registered voters of The City of Seattle, State of Washington, propose and request the implementation of the measure referred to as Initiative Measure No. [.....] entitled:
 A full, true and correct copy of which is included herein, and we petition the Council to present said proposed ordinance; and, if not enacted within forty-five (45) days from the time of receipt thereof by the City Council, then to be submitted to the qualified electors of The City of Seattle for approval or rejection at the next regular election or at a special election in accordance with Article IV, Section 1 of the City Charter; and each of us for himself or herself says: I have personally signed this petition; I am a registered voter of The City of Seattle, State of Washington, and my residence address is correctly stated.

	Printed Name of Voter	Signature of Voter	Residence Address	Date Signed
1.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
2.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
3.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
4.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
5.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
6.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
7.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
8.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
9.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
10.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
11.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
12.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
13.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
14.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
15.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
16.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
17.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
18.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
19.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date
20.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	Date

If you have already signed *Initiative Number Here* please do not sign again.

March 1 Nuclear Survivors and Victims Day

INSERT OFFICIAL BALLOT TITLE and INSERT SERIAL NUMBER ASSIGNED BY SECRETARY OF STATE

Ballot Measure Summary
Insert Summary Here

INITIATIVE PETITION FOR SUBMISION TO THE PEOPLE
To the Honorable _____, Secretary of State of the State of Washington:
We, the undersigned citizens and legal voters of the State of Washington,
respectfully direct that this petition and the proposed measure known as Initiative
Measure No. and entitled (here set forth the established ballot title of the
measure), a full, true, and correct copy of which is printed on the reverse side of
this petition, be transmitted to the legislature of the State of Washington at its next
ensuing regular session, and we respectfully petition the legislature to enact said
proposed measure into law; and each of us for himself or herself says: I have
personally signed this petition; I am a legal voter of the State of Washington in the
city (or town) and county written after my name, my residence address is correctly
stated, and I have knowingly signed this petition only once

WARNING:

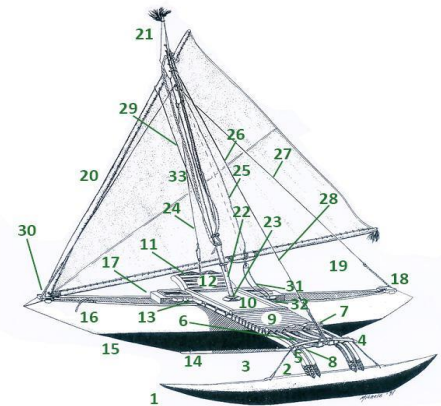
Every person who signs this petition with any other than his or her true name,
knowingly signs more than one of these petitions, signs this petition when he or she
is not a legal voter, or makes any false statement on this petition may be punished
by fine or imprisonment or both.

	Printed Name of Voter	Signature of Voter	Your Home Address	City	County
1.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
2.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
3.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
4.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
5.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
6.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
7.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
8.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
9.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
10.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
11.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
12.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
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17.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
18.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
19.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County
20.		Please sign as registered to vote	Your Address	City	County

I,, swear or affirm under penalty of law that I circulated this sheet of the foregoing petition, and that, to the best of my knowledge, every person who signed this sheet of the foregoing petition knowingly and without any compensation or promise of compensation willingly signed his or her true name and that the information provided therewith is true and correct. I further acknowledge that under chapter 29A.84 RCW, forgery of signatures on this petition constitutes a class C felony, and that offering any consideration or gratuity to any person to induce them to sign a petition is a gross misdemeanor, such violations being punishable by fine or imprisonment or both.

Health Care Access Inequality: *Addressing Barriers Faced by the Marshallese in the U.S.*

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Kubaak = Outrigger | 18. Depakaak = Tack socket |
| 2. Ae = Top of outrigger | 19. Rojak kōrā = Boom |
| 3. Kabōj = Outrigger stays | 20. Rojak maan = Top boom |
| 4. Jojo = Outrigger arm | 21. Lot = Mast top |
| 5. Apet = Outrigger booms | 22. Kiju = Mast |
| 6. Kie = Outrigger secondary boom | 23. Bōklap = Mast step |
| 7. Mweur lñ = Adjustable top | 24. Toon roñ = Leeward shroud |
| 8. Mweur lal = Adjustable bottom | 25. Tiliej = Reef lines |
| 9. Kein ion ere = Outrigger deck slats | 26. To kubaak = Windward shroud |
| 10. Ere = Platform | 27. Jomur = Back stay/forestay |
| 11. Kein maan roñ = Leeward deck slats | 28. Maan = Halyard |
| 12. Roñ = Storage | 29. Jellikok/Keplok = Running mast stay |
| 13. Jirukili/Kilkili = Mainsheet cleat | 30. Kōpālpel = Sail's leach |
| 14. Erer/Mal = Replaceable shoe | 31. Iep lik = Boom bridle |
| 15. Jouj = Bottom part of hull | 32. Iep/toon iep = Main sheet |
| 16. Mej = Top part of hull | 33. Ujelā = Sail |
| 17. Boor aj = Hatch | |



“Jouj refers to the base of the Marshallese canoe, but also translates to kindness...Marshallese culture begins at kindness and radiates outwards to all other aspects of the culture. Whether it is lending a helping hand or coming together to ensure everyone has the resources they need from one day to the next. So, it is no coincidence that jouj is applied to the structure of the canoe and lives of the Marshallese. The cohesiveness of the culture relies on the jouj of the people, just like the canoe relies on the jouj of the canoe.”

-Karen Earnshaw

Hans Nothstein, Rachael Tamngin, and Monirangsey Touch

Would it be a tragedy if there were individuals who legally lived and worked in the United States paying state and federal taxes, but were denied access to basic Federal benefit programs regardless of their qualifying needs? Would it be imperative under the founding principles of the United States of America that such standards be reversed so that the those people could be granted access to benefit programs they need, and which their taxes support?

For many citizens of the Marshall Islands who are living and working in the U.S. as legal residents, this their reality.¹⁴¹ After reviewing the manner in which this tragic and peculiar predicament has arisen, we believe it is important that Marshallese people living in the U.S., as well as other COFA citizens, be allowed access to Federal benefit programs as soon as possible. Through our health care policy section, we will give background information on this issue, and will put forth several ways in which the situation can be ameliorated.

Context to the Problem

The freedoms granted to Marshallese under the 1986 Compact of Free Association (COFA) were created in recognition and support of the special and mutually beneficial relationship that the United States and RMI share.¹⁴² At that time, and until 1996, Marshallese migrants qualified for federally funded benefit programs.¹⁴³ Through the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 (PRWORA), Marshallese were newly categorized as unqualified for these programs, despite their previous status or their long and special history with the United States.¹⁴⁴ Notably, this disqualifies Marshallese from receiving Medicaid or Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) benefits. Consequently, Marshallese who live, work, and pay state and federal taxes in the U.S. do not qualify for basic health care services such as Medicaid or CHIP, even though portions of their taxes are directed to these programs.

Many outside of Marshallese communities do not understand the unique migrant status of the Marshallese as well as their sudden disqualification from federal programs. Today, the importance and relevance of the matter is increasing dramatically. From 2000 to 2010, Marshallese migration to the United States tripled, and today there are approximately 40,000 Marshallese living in the U.S.¹⁴⁵ – tens of thousands of individuals who struggle to receive basic health care, even when working and paying taxes that are directed to such federal programs.

The Efforts of the Health Care Policy Subgroup

¹⁴¹ McElfish, Pearl Anna, Emily Hallgren, and Seiji Yamada. "Effect of US Health Policies on Health Care Access for Marshallese Migrants." *American Journal of Public Health* 105, no. 4 (2015): 637-43. Accessed January 28, 2017. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4358182/>

¹⁴² U.S. House of Representatives (2003).

¹⁴³ McElfish, (2015).

¹⁴⁴ United States, 104th Congress. Public Law 104-193, “Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act”. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1996.

¹⁴⁵ McElfish, (2015).

In the current political climate, the possibilities of changing federal law are limited. Accordingly, we have focused on developing tools that could be used in efforts to facilitate policy changes here in our home state of Washington that would benefit Marshallese migrants. Considering the U.S. nuclear weapons testing program and the ongoing health consequences it has created for the Marshallese,¹⁴⁶ it is urgent that basic health services be provided at affordable rates to those living in the United States.

Here it is important to note that while the Marshallese are in a unique position considering the legacy of U.S. nuclear testing within their island nation, they are not alone in the struggles they face in accessing health care. The United States has also entered into the Compact of Free Association with the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and with the Republic of Palau (Palau). Citizens of these two nations share the same freedoms that are granted to Marshallese citizens: they can freely enter into, live within, and seek employment in the United States without the need of a visa. Collectively, citizens of these three Pacific Island nations are categorized as COFA migrants, and they are legally considered “nonimmigrants without visas.”¹⁴⁷ Under their shared immigration status, the effects of PRWORA are the same for all COFA migrants. Though our Task Force’s focus is on the broad lasting impacts of U.S. nuclear weapons tests conducted in the Marshall Islands specifically, the shared migrant status of Marshallese with Palauan and FSM citizens means that the tools created by this subgroup can be used to the benefit of citizens of all three Pacific Island nations. We believe that the importance of providing equal access to basic health care for all tax-paying individuals in the United States is cause enough to warrant efforts to change the current restrictions that are placed on COFA citizens.

To that end, our goal is to create tools that could be used to: 1) raise awareness about the particular difficulties that COFA citizens face when they seek access to health care in the United States, and; 2) influence the positions of WA State policymakers and other actors that can play a role in shaping policy to provide easier access to health care for COFA citizens.

The Tools We Chose

With the aforementioned objectives, we decided to construct two tools that could be used to benefit efforts supporting policy designed to improve access to health care for COFA migrants in the United States. These tools are: 1) an educational pamphlet that can be used to quickly educate any individual who reads it of the status of Marshallese migrants regarding their ability to access health care in the United States, and; 2) an informative and persuasive letter that can be sent to policymakers and other actors who could influence the passage of legislation that would improve access to health care for COFA migrants in Washington State.

The Educational Pamphlet

¹⁴⁶ McElfish, (2015).

¹⁴⁷ McElfish, (2015).

The educational pamphlet has a simple goal: to quickly inform readers of the status of Marshallese migrants regarding their ability to access affordable health care in the United States. We hope that this pamphlet will bring awareness about the status of COFA migrants, and will promote grassroots campaigns to help COFA migrants access health care.

The difficulties faced by Marshallese citizens when trying to access health care services are little known by regular citizens or by many United States policymakers. In order to remedy this lack of awareness, the pamphlet concisely and thoroughly explains the Compact of Free Association as well as PRWORA, and gives examples of the real consequences PRWORA has on Marshallese migrants. The pamphlet concludes with information about efforts being made to make improvements for COFA citizens in Washington State and gives suggestions on how Washington State citizens can get involved and make a difference. The pamphlet is meant to be widely distributed as a way to bring awareness to the public.

Recognizing that a lack of public awareness is a major issue faced by efforts attempting to improve access to health care for COFA citizens in the U.S., we felt that a tool that could quickly and easily provide information on the issue would be a powerful and useful resource. The pamphlet we created can be distributed physically or electronically, meaning that anyone with access to a PDF file of the document will be immediately able to use it to inform individuals in their community about the problem.

Letters to be Sent to Legislators and other Actors

The problem of COFA citizens lacking fair access to health care is one that can be resolved through policy on the federal level, or can be improved through policy changes on a state by state basis. Therefore, support from legislators and other policy-influencing actors is critical.

With this goal of federal and state-level legislative change in mind, we created a tool that could be used to educate policy-influencing actors about the current situation of COFA citizens vis-a-vis lack of affordable health care access. Ideally, when legislators become better informed on this issue, they will feel compelled to take action on behalf of COFA migrants living in the United States. We have thus drafted a letter that can be distributed to Washington State legislators and other actors. The letter can be used as a template for letters to other legislators outside of Washington State with minimal modification. Our hope is that this letter would successfully encourage legislators to act upon, or support action on this important matter.

The letter can be downloaded, modified, and sent physically or electronically by any Washington State resident to their state representatives or to other actors who might be able to influence health care policy in the interest of COFA citizens.

In addition, we also drafted a letter that can be sent specifically by members of our Task Force. Hopefully, with clear support from University of Washington students well versed in the history of U.S. - RMI relations and the current problems faced by Marshallese citizens, these letters

can have a powerful impact on the agendas of legislators and other actors who might be able to support positive change on this important matter.

We have also developed a one-page summary of the issue to be submitted along with the letter. This summary introduces the problem to the recipient, and communicates support for policy expanding healthcare access for COFA citizens. It then gives the reasons for the positions we are supporting. We hope that residents will send electronic or physical versions of the letter with the summary, and that, taken together, these two items will give Washington State legislators or other actors a thorough introduction to the health care problem regarding COFA citizens. Hopefully this would lead to new policy equalizing health care access in Washington State.

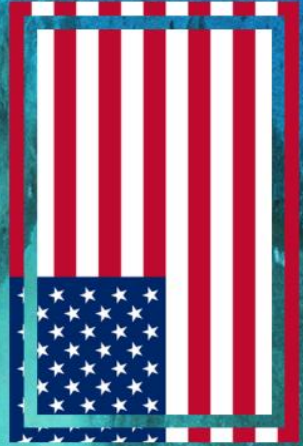
The letter and accompanying summary we have drafted are meant to be used again and again to reach out to legislators and policy-influencing actors in Washington State, educating them about the problem at hand, and encouraging their support of efforts to improve access to healthcare for COFA migrants. Our hope is that wide distribution and utilization of these tools will help the passage of new policy supporting the interests of COFA soon.

Our Hopes Moving Forward

Simply put, we are very concerned to see the obstacles faced by COFA citizens seeking access to affordable health care in the United States. It is our position that adequate access to basic health care ought to be provided to anyone legally working and paying taxes in the U.S., and it is our hope that the tools we have created can and will be used to promote policy that improves this situation for the Marshallese and other COFA migrants.



.....
**Did you know that
 there are lawful
 U.S. residents who
 work and pay
 taxes but aren't
 allowed access to
 health care?**



.....
THE PROBLEM

Because of their special relationship to the United States, citizens of the Pacific island nations of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), the Republic of Palau (Palau), and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) can freely live in and accept employment in the U.S., and they often serve in its military too. When working in the U.S., these individuals pay both state and federal taxes, including taxes for Medicaid and Social Security, but tragically, migrants from these island nations do not qualify for federal loans or federal assistance programs.

.....



**THE COMPACT OF FREE
 ASSOCIATION**

In 1986, the United States passed into law a mutual agreement, the Compact of Free Association, with the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). The purpose of COFA is to recognize and support the special and mutually beneficial relationship between the U.S. and the RMI. Citizens of RMI can legally enter into, reside within, and work in the United States. As part of the agreement, the U.S. has exclusive military control over 2 million square miles of ocean and land. The US also maintains a strategic military installment on Kwajalein Atoll, where hundreds of Marshallese and U.S. citizens work alongside each other. The 20 year renewal of the Compact passed into law in 2003 indicates that this special international relationship is desirable and long lasting.

.....

PRWORA

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 was signed into law on August 22, 1996. PRWORA restricted access to federally-funded programs for COFA citizens for no clear reason. Under Title IV (Restricting Welfare and Public Benefit for Aliens) of the PRWORA, COFA migrants were excluded from the 'qualified aliens' category, which stripped them of their eligibility for federal benefits, including Medicaid.

MARSHALLESE STORIES

Over six decades ago, the United States conducted nuclear bomb testings on the Marshall Islands. U.S. researchers also conducted experiments to observe the effects of nuclear radiation on humans. One of the main reasons, Marshallese travel to the United States is to receive treatment for cancer and other diseases caused from nuclear testing and experimentation done by the United States.

"And the big question is the main reason why we came from our home is to find education and health care. The question is... is there any way that we can get some sort of assistance. The medical bills are high now. But we believe that we are sick now, we have all these sickness or diseases is because of the atomic testing." - Andy Zacharias

The reality for the Marshallese people is that they cannot access any health care despite the vast amount of health disparities they have faced for several generations. Heart disease and cancer are the leading causes of death amongst Pacific Islanders, yet the Marshallese people describe how it is still hard to receive Medicaid, the most basic of medical care.



"THE WHOLE MARSHALL ISLANDS IS CONDEMNED FROM THE BOMB. THERE IS A LOT OF PEOPLE THAT GOT SICK... THYROID AND CANCER AND A LOT MORE... TUMOR. ALL KINDS OF SICKNESS. IT IS VERY SAD FOR ALL OF US PEOPLE OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS" - ON THE ISSUE OF HEALTHCARE AND NUCLEAR TESTINGS
~REV. JUDA

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?

On the state level, Oregon has made significant progress and created a program to help COFA citizens receive Medicaid for their health concerns. Washington state is now working towards implementing a similar program to that in Oregon.

In 2016, Oregon passed legislation that created a COFA Premium Assistance Program, which provides free health insurance for low-income COFA migrants. This program covers doctor's visits, emergency care, preventative care, prescriptions and others.

Now, Washington's HB 1291 would provide access to health care services for COFA migrants residing in the state of Washington. This bill would increase access by providing premium and cost-sharing assistance for health coverage purchased through the health benefit exchange.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

It is important to reach out to your representatives in the Senate, House of Representatives, and any elected official that influences policy. Voicing your opinion on the issues that COFA migrants face day-to-day will bring awareness to issues that have persisted for more than two decades. Below is a link to representatives that you can reach out to and explain to them why providing Medicaid, the most basic of health care, to the Marshallese people is so necessary.

Contact your representatives at this website:
<http://leg.wa.gov/>

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Giammehilli, Franco, Priscilla Huang, Deodonic Bhattarai, and Paulo Pontemayor. "Medicaid Parity for Pacific Migrant Populations in the United States." *Asian American Policy Review* 24 (2013): 41-54.

CPAA. "Health Equity for COFA Islanders." Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs. October 6, 2016.

United States Government. Department of State. "COMPACT OF FREE ASSOCIATION, AS AMENDED, BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS." April 30, 2003.

"Compact of Free Association: Single Audits Demonstrate Accountability Problems over Compact Funds." United States General Accounting Office. October 10, 2003.

"Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders in the United States, 2014: A Community of Contrasts." Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC) and Asian Americans. 2014.

Zacharias, Andy. Interviewed by Carmen Borja. Small Group Interview. Burke Museum. March 1, 2016.

Name of Constituent
Address

Name of Legislator/Representative
Address

Salutation [Letter Greeting],

As a Washington State resident, I urge you to expand Medicaid eligibility to all residents, and COFA citizens. Medicaid expansion would have many positive impacts on hospitals, physicians, and on our state's economy as a whole. With the expansion of Medicaid, would come significant health improvements in not only Washington state residents, but non-resident and minority groups as well.

I am writing you today because of the injustice caused by the denial of the public health care program, Medicaid, for the Marshallese citizens in our state. I feel that it is very important for all Marshallese citizens to have access to health benefits. When the United States signed the Compact of Free Association with the Marshall Islands and two other island nations in 1986, the U.S. government agreed to provide financial and technical assistance in the field of health care. The Marshallese sacrificed their homeland, culture, and health, so that the United States could conduct nuclear tests following World War II. The Marshallese citizens are caught in an unjust system. Many have served in the U.S. military, those working in the U.S. pay local and federal taxes, and are legal residents. Despite all of this, they are disqualified for Medicaid because of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The exclusion of Marshallese from Medicaid is a violation of the Equal Protection Clause under the Fourteenth Amendment. The Marshallese citizens have experienced disillusionment when they discover that the majority of our democratic ideals do not apply to them. Taking into account the hardships that the US has thrust upon the Marshallese, it is not only unjust, but inequitable that the Marshallese are excluded from this public protection.

"I see an injustice done to our people. You know COFA citizens...we are people, but we are left out of their plans of the medical plans which I think is very unfair...that makes it difficult for our people." (Gigi, Interpreter for the Marshallese community, work in court)

I would ask that you support House Bill 1291, its companion bill, Senate Bill 5683, and other efforts to restore Medicaid for COFA citizens in the state of Washington.

Thank you very much for your time and any steps you take to restore Medicaid for COFA citizens. For more information regarding this issue, please find the In-Depth analysis attached.

Cordially,

Name of Constituent
Address

Name of Legislator/Representative
Address

Salutation [Letter Greeting],

My name is _____, and I am a student in the Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington. I am contacting you on behalf of my task force, Nuclear Colonialism: Re-Examining US Obligations to the Marshall Islands.

I am writing you today because of the injustice caused by the denial of the public health care program, Medicaid, for the Marshallese citizens in our state. I feel that it is very important for all Marshallese citizens to have access to health benefits. When the United States signed the Compact of Free Association with the Marshall Islands and two other island nations in 1986, the U.S. government agreed to provide financial and technical assistance in the field of health care. The Marshallese sacrificed their homeland, culture, and health, so that the United States could conduct nuclear tests following World War II. The Marshallese citizens are caught in an unjust system. Many of them have served in the US military, pay local and federal taxes, and are legal residents. Despite all of these conditions, they are disqualified for Medicaid because of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The exclusion of Marshallese from Medicaid is a violation of the Equal Protection Clause under the 14th Amendment. Considering what the United States has done to the Marshall Islands and its people, it is unfair that the US excluded the Marshallese people from affordable health coverage.

“I see an injustice done to our people. You know COFA citizens...we are people, but we are left out of their plans of the medical plans which I think is very unfair...that makes it difficult for our people.” (Gigi, Interpreter for the Marshallese community, work in court)

I would ask that you support House Bill 1291, and its companion bill, Senate Bill 5683, as well as other efforts to restore Medicaid for COFA citizens in the state of Washington.

Thank you very much for your time and any efforts you take to restore Medicaid for COFA citizens. For more information regarding this issue, please refer to the In-Depth Analysis attached to the letter.

Cordially,

[Email of student]

In-Depth Analysis

“The Americans thought that we are just like the animals. We are guinea pigs. We are like the animals that they brought.”¹⁴⁸

-*Lucky Juda* (Interview during the solidarity ceremony at the Burke Museum)

¹⁴⁸ Lucky, Juda. Interviewed by members of the UW Micronesia Club. Personal Interview. Seattle, March 1, 2016.

Historical Context

After World War II, the Marshall Islands became one of the eleven territories of the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and was designated as a strategic territory under the jurisdiction of the United States. From 1946 to 1958, the U.S. government detonated a total of sixty-seven atomic weapons in and around the Marshall Islands, twenty-three of those on Bikini Atoll and the remainder on or near Enewetak Atoll.¹⁴⁹ The largest test, named “Castle Bravo,” was detonated on Bikini Atoll in 1954, and yielded equivalent to 15 megatons of TNT--1,000 times the quantity of TNT that the Hiroshima bomb released.¹⁵⁰ The disastrous explosion on these atolls caused ecological and health effects that continue to bring harm today.

Groups of Marshallese and US citizens living on the atolls during that time were exposed to radiation fallout. The exposure to excessive dosages of radioactive fallout has been proven to cause many long-term health problems, such as thyroid cancer, growth abnormalities, and birth defects¹⁵¹. Additionally, groups of Marshallese people were the unknowing subjects of the unethical human radiation experiments, through a study known as Project 4.1.¹⁵² The government of the United States did not explain or ask the participants for permission to enroll them as the subjects in these experiments.

About one-half of the Marshallese population depended on agricultural production before the nuclear weapons testing program, but after the testing, the Rongelapese population was alienated

¹⁴⁹ “The Legacy of U.S. Nuclear Testing and Radiation Exposure in the Marshall Islands.” *U.S. Embassy in the Republic of the Marshall Islands*. September 26, 2016. Accessed January 16, 2017. <https://mh.usembassy.gov/the-legacy-of-u-s-nuclear-testing-and-radiation-exposure-in-the-marshall-islands/>

¹⁵⁰ Mcelfish, Pearl Anna, Emily Hallgren, and Seiji Yamada. "Effect of US Health Policies on Health Care Access for Marshallese Migrants." *American Journal of Public Health* 105, no. 4 (2015): 637-43. Accessed January 28, 2017. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4358182/>

¹⁵¹ Barker, Holly M. *Bravo for the Marshallese : Regaining Control in a Post-Nuclear, Post-Colonial World*. 2nd ed. Case Studies on Contemporary Social Issues. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2013. Pg. 104.

¹⁵² Nuclear Savage: The Islands of Secret Project 4.1, directed by Adam Jonas Horowitz. 2011. Santa Fe, CA: A Primordial Soup Company. Web.

from its land and resources¹⁵³. The contamination of the land and food chain caused the Marshallese people to alter their diet and their traditional lifestyle. Radioactive contamination caused the Marshallese to relocate to different atolls, leaving behind their homes, land, and ancestral connections. The community was fractured as people from Rongelap moved to Mejjatto, an uninhabited island. The Rongelapese were reluctant to gather the available resources on Mejjatto because they had no rights to use the island.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, the geographical features of Mejjatto also made it difficult for men to fish as well as to pass on knowledge about fishing to the younger generation.¹⁵⁵ The US government relocated people to nearby islands as a preventative measure; however, information about the consequences of these tests was kept classified.

Due to the long-lasting health and environmental effects caused by these tests, the United States made an effort to compensate the Marshallese people. The United States and representatives from the Marshall Islands spent years drafting an agreement with the intent of alleviating the burden and restoring the damages caused by nuclear testing. Though the intent was good, the result of this agreement, called the Compact of Free Association (COFA), did not fully compensate for the damages to the Marshall Islands and sacrifices of the Marshallese. Enacted into law in 1986, COFA demands that the US government compensate the Marshallese for their discomfort of relocation, health threats, and destruction of the islands.¹⁵⁶ The three main provisions of the Compact are:

1. The Marshall Islands is allowed to become an independent state and can alter its status with the U.S. at any time.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Barker, 66.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 67.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 68.

¹⁵⁶ *Compact of Free Association Act of 1985*. Public Law 99-239. 99th Congress (1986). Accessed January 10, 2017. <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/99/hjres187/text>

¹⁵⁷ Skoog, Kim. "U.S. Nuclear Testing on the Marshall Islands: 1946 to 1958." *Teaching Ethics* 3, no. 2 (2003): 67-81. Accessed January 29, 2017.

<https://www.uvu.edu/ethics/seac/US%20Nuclear%20Testing%20on%20the%20Marshal%20Islands.pdf>

2. The United States provides assistance to the islands in the field of health and education as well as building infrastructures.¹⁵⁸
3. The United States continues to use Kwajalein Atoll as a weapons testing site.¹⁵⁹

Under COFA, the Marshall Islands declares itself as a sovereign nation; however, the United States can still maintain the authority and responsibility for security and defense of the Marshall Islands. For instance, the government of the Marshall Islands is obligated to refrain from taking actions that are deemed as incompatible with the US interests.¹⁶⁰ The US Department of Defense continues to maintain military installation and the Kwajalein Atoll missile test range.¹⁶¹

In this special and mutually beneficial relationship, the United States is responsible for providing financial and technical assistance to the RMI. Section 216 of the Compact states that the US government shall provide on a current account basis an annual grant of \$5.359 million for fifteen years, and \$1.791 million annually for health and medical programs, including referrals to hospital and treatment centers.¹⁶² In order to continuously compensate for the damages caused by past nuclear testing, the United States renewed COFA with the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia providing \$3.5 billion in funding to both island nations.¹⁶³ Due to the fact that gradual ecological change made human habitation unviable in certain parts of the Marshall Islands, an increasing number of Marshallese citizens have migrated to the United States. The search for better

¹⁵⁸ Kim, "U.S. Nuclear Testing on the Marshall Islands: 1946 to 1958", 69.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 70.

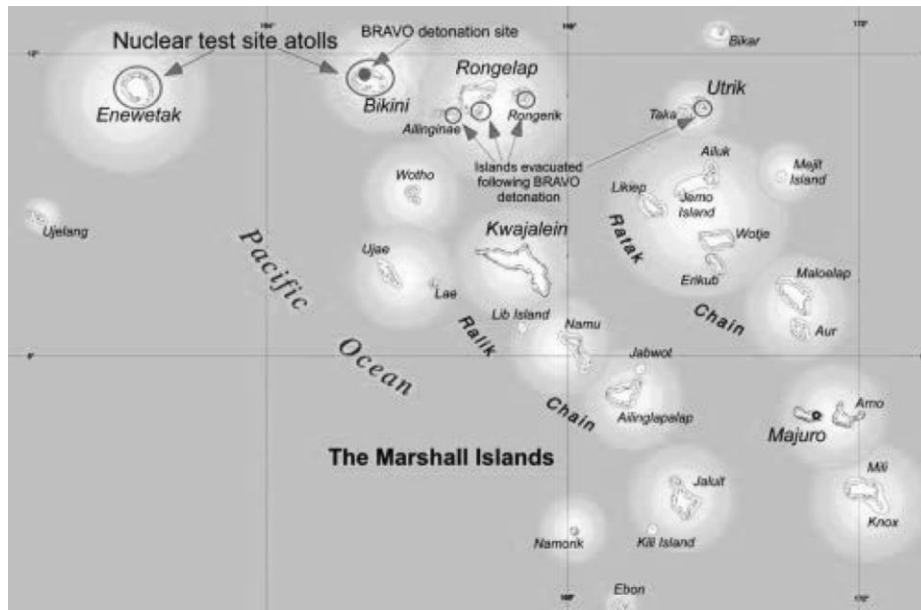
¹⁶⁰ United States. Department of State. Bureau of East Asian Pacific Affairs, Issuing Body. *U.S. Relations with Marshall Islands*, 2012. Accessed January 15, 2017. <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/26551.htm>

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

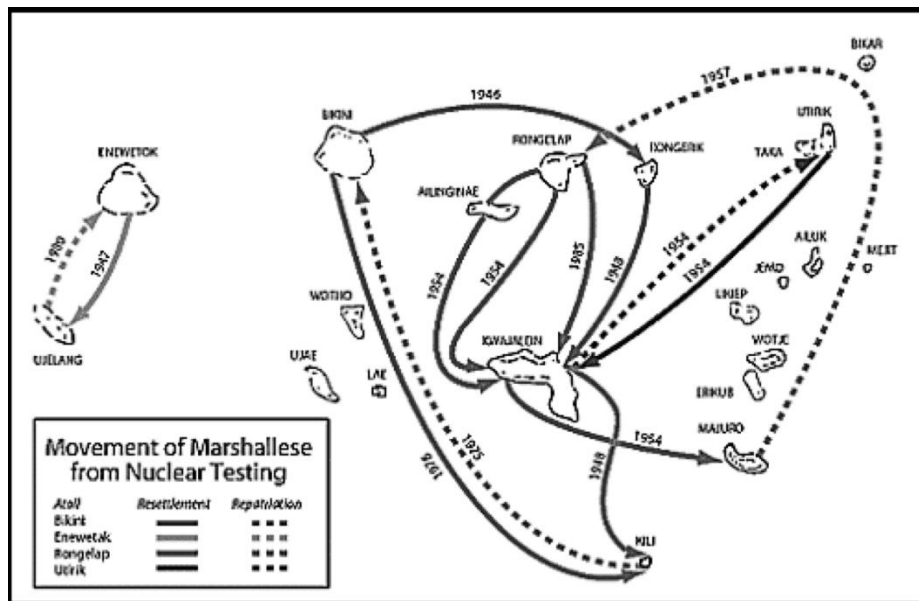
¹⁶² Public Law 99-239. 99th Congress (1986).

¹⁶³ "What is COFA." *COFA Alliance National Network (CANN)*. Accessed January 15, 2017. <http://www.cann.us/node/3>

medical treatment was the one of the many motives behind the Marshallese people's decision to migrate.¹⁶⁴



Atolls of the RMI and locations of nuclear testing sites. [Embassy of the Republic of the Marshall Islands]¹⁶⁵



¹⁶⁴ "Broken Promises, Shattered Lives: The Case for Justice for Micronesians in Hawai'i." Honolulu: Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, 2011. Accessed February 1, 2017.

¹⁶⁵ Nuclear Testing in the Marshall Islands: A Brief History. Majuro: Micronitor news and Printing Company, August 1996. Accessed February 2, 2017. <http://www.rmiembassyus.org/Nuclear%20Issues.htm>

Movement of Marshallese from nuclear testing. [Embassy of the Republic of the Marshall Islands] ¹⁶⁶

Marshallese Citizens in the U.S.

Under the Compact of Free Association, Marshallese citizens are able to travel to and from the United States and have indefinite work authorization in the country. Like all other immigrants and US citizens, the Marshallese people are required to pay both state and federal taxes. When COFA was first implemented in 1986, Marshallese people, like other legal residents of the US, were considered eligible for Medicaid and other social safety nets. However, when President Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) into law, Marshallese citizens and those from the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau were stripped of their eligibility for those federally funded programs due to their status as “not qualified immigrants”.¹⁶⁷

Although PRWORA disqualified COFA citizens from Medicaid eligibility, state governments still have the discretion to provide Medicaid coverage using state funds. Currently, Oregon is the only state that gives Marshallese citizens access to affordable health insurance plans. In 2016, Oregon signed a legislation into law and created a Compact of Free Association Premium Assistance Program, providing free health insurance to low-income citizens from the Marshall Islands and the other two island nations who are legally residing in Oregon.¹⁶⁸ Washington has the third largest population of Marshallese people, and the majority of them are residing in Auburn, Everett, Lynnwood, Spokane, Vancouver, and Federal Way.¹⁶⁹ In Washington State, Representative Santos and others are advocating for COFA communities and their access to affordable health care. As of

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996*. Public Law 104-193. 104th Congress (1996). Accessed January 12, 2017. <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/104/hr3734/text>

¹⁶⁸ “What is COFA?”, 2.

¹⁶⁹ “Health Equity for COFA Islanders.” *Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (CAPAA)*. October 6, 2016. Accessed January 25, 2017. <http://capaa.wa.gov/health-equity-for-cofa-islanders/>

2017, the Representative is sponsoring HB 1291, which concerns COFA citizens access to both affordable and free health coverage. The bill was introduced in January of 2017, but has not been reviewed by a committee yet. Since the bill is going through the legislative process, nothing is guaranteed. It is up to the state of Washington to guarantee that COFA citizens have access to affordable health care since it has been unjustly denied to them on a federal level since 1996.

The devastating consequences of nuclear testing make the ethical issues associated with the US policy and action even more critical and relevant. The United States has a unique historical relationship with the Marshall Islands in particular due to the nuclear weapons testing program. The U.S. has benefitted immensely from conducting nuclear tests far from the mainland. It has used the islands, the Marshallese people and resources to advance the United States health, welfare, and strategic military position. Within this relationship, the Marshallese made many sacrifices and continue to bear the burden of a damaged and contaminated islands. To this day, Marshallese people continue to suffer from the effects of radioactive contamination--high rates of cancer and other chronic diseases such as heart diseases, diabetes, and hepatitis.

The U.S. is not doing enough in terms of compensating the Marshallese people for their sacrifices. The lack of proper health benefits for the Marshallese citizens in the U.S. is a glaring example of the U.S. government's inadequate care in safeguarding the wellbeing of the Marshallese people.

After the enactment of PRWORA, the US health care system excluded COFA citizens from various programs even though their tax dollars are supporting those programs and services. Low-income Marshallese are either left without health insurance coverage or must pay premiums that are far more expensive than they can afford. Patients with serious illnesses face the loss of vital preventative care and life-saving treatment. Under the current law, COFA citizens are eligible for emergency services, such as Medicaid for emergency medical care or the Federal Emergency

Management Agency disaster services.¹⁷⁰ Nevertheless, it is inhumane and unethical to force an individual to go without health care until it is an emergency condition. Moreover, the Marshallese people are required by law to have health insurance despite their ineligibility for Medicaid, or they face tax penalties. This unjustified treatment of the Marshallese shows that the United States does not honor its commitment to friendship with the Marshallese people.

The discussion of violating the Equal Protection Clause under the Fourteenth Amendment also came to light due to limited health coverage to COFA citizens. In 2014, Tony Korab, Tojio Clanton and Keben Enoch (collectively known as ‘Korab’) filed a class action suit on behalf of all COFA citizens residing in Hawai’i. After the enactment of PRWORA in 1996, Hawai’i continued to provide health coverage to COFA citizens under its state health insurance. However, after the decline in revenues, Hawai’i stopped providing COFA citizens its general health insurance plans, and created a new plan with more limited coverage. Under this class action suit, Korab argued that Hawai’i is violating the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment because “it provides less health coverage to COFA residents than the health coverage that Hawai’i provides to citizens and qualified aliens who are eligible for federal reimbursements through Medicaid.”¹⁷¹ In court, the panel claimed that Congress has authorized states to “make their own eligibility determinations” for aliens like the COFA residents.¹⁷²

By leaving the issue of affordable health care access for COFA citizens up to each state to determine, each individual state can exclude certain not-qualified immigrant groups from health coverage. The panel also noted that the state does not have a “constitutional obligation” to fill the

¹⁷⁰ Siskin, Alison. “Noncitizen Eligibility for Federal Public Assistance: Policy Overview.” *Congressional Research Service*. Dec. 12, 2016. Accessed January 23, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL33809.pdf>

¹⁷¹ Korab v. Fink. United States Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit. August 2014. Accessed January 20, 2017. <http://willamette.edu/law/resources/journals/wlo/9thcir/2014/04/korab-v.-fink.htm>

¹⁷² Korab v. Fink, 8.

gap left by Congress's withdrawal of federal funding for COFA residents.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, it is also the federal government, not just individual states, that is deemed responsible for providing affordable health coverage to COFA citizens. After all, the government of the United States has agreed to the provisions of the Compact of Free Association.

Recommendations and Conclusions

The federal government needs to do more, either through funding or policy implementation. One action the federal government can take is to amend the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWORA) to include COFA citizens as qualified immigrants. This classification would allow COFA citizens to have access to Medicaid and other federally-funded programs. In addition, it is important that the federal government keeps states in check and ensures that no individuals are denied from Medicaid due to their race, social class, or gender.

The Marshallese people have suffered great injustices as a result of US nuclear weapons testing on their lands, while the United States continues to benefit from its use and control of the region militarily. The United States has a moral obligation and legal responsibility to repair the damages caused by nuclear testing. Likewise, the state of Washington has an obligation to provide affordable health coverage to the Marshallese populations residing in this state. The United States can begin to restore and honor its friendship with the Marshallese citizens by restoring Medicaid, which would provide equal access to health care benefits.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 2.

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Facing Invisibility in the United States as COFA Migrants

Ettołok ilikin lometo	Far away over the ocean
Eo ɭok wõt,	Even farther,
Ej pād aelōñ eo emman tata	Is the homeland that is best
Ijo iaar ɭotak ie	Where I was born
Ij keememej ijo iaar bed ie	I remember where I was
Ke iaar ajiri	When I was a child
Imweo iturin kiap ko rōnaaj	The house by the fragrant lilies
Ijo iaar ɭotak ie	The house where I was born

Aelōñ otemjej rōnana,	Another home is not as good
Juon wõt emman	Only one is the best
Jera men eɭap aō oñ kake	My friends that I miss
Bwe in lo aelōñ eo ao	I can see them in my homeland

Ke ij ito-itak ioon laj in	As I roam the world
Ij būromōj	I am sad
In jepɭaak ñan ippan ro jatū	And want to return to my younger siblings
Im oñ kōn ro nukū	And yearn for my family
Ñāāt inaaj roñ ainikien jinō	When will I hear my mother's voice
Kūr tok ñan eō,	Calling to me
Ñāāt inaaj bar kwelok im nukū	When will I see again my family
Ilo mweo imō	In my own home?

*“Ettolok Ilikin Lometo”
-Kathy Jetnil-Kjiner*

Raising Awareness about the Presence of COFA Migrants in the U.S.

There are many Compact of Free Association (COFA) migrants currently living in the U.S. These migrants come from the islands of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. In comparison to the other Micronesian groups, the Marshallese population is one of the fastest growing Pacific Islander communities in the US.¹⁷⁴

However, little is known among the general U.S. public about the Compact of Free Association generally, and the Marshallese people in particular. Due to the complexity and relative obscurity of the COFA agreement, the general public, as well as lawmakers and labor communities, are often unaware of the unique situation of Marshallese people in the U.S. Thus, this portion of the report will focus on the reasons why Marshallese people migrate to the U.S., and the difficulties they face once in the U.S. As these challenges are not well known to people outside of the COFA diaspora, this section includes an informational pamphlet, a tool that offers one way of combating the invisibility of the Marshallese in this country. The goal of this pamphlet is to raise awareness among communities in which Marshallese live and work about Marshallese COFA migrants, and how to best support them in the context of the workplace.

Before Migration: What is COFA?

The Compact of Free Association (COFA) allows Republic of the Marshall Islands citizens to freely travel to the United States with no visa to work, go to school, and live. Through this agreement, the United States government provides economic and financial aid to, and defends the RMI in return for the RMI's provision of the United States with unlimited and exclusive access to its land and waterways for strategic military purposes¹⁷⁵.

However, the complexity of the COFA agreement has led to some confusion in labor force communities as to the true status of COFA migrants in the U.S. These communities often don't understand the COFA status of these migrants and thus due to a lack of COFA knowledge, employers may not know how to best support COFA migrants.

Causes of Marshallese Migration to the U.S.

Marshallese people seek access to improved economic opportunities, education, and better healthcare systems when they come to the U.S. Another cause of Marshallese migration to the U.S.

¹⁷⁴Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders & A Community of Contrasts in the United States . Report. 2014. Accessed February 8, 2017. http://empoweredpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/A_Community_of_Contrasts_NHPI_US_2014-1.pdf.

¹⁷⁵Marshall Islands. *Compact of free association: agreement between the United States of America and the Marshall Islands amending the agreement of June 25, 1983, concerning the compact of free association, as amended ; signed at Majuro, April 30, 2003*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of State, 2011.

is their recruitment to the U.S. military. But it is supremely ironic that, even though Marshallese are able to serve in the U.S. Military, they do not have access to major federal programs. While others with Legal Permanent Resident status are eligible for Supplemental Security Income if they are naturalized or have a military connection,¹⁷⁶ Marshallese under COFA are considered non-immigrants, and thus do not qualify for any federal programs.

Despite serving in the U.S. military, paying taxes, and living in the United States for extended periods of time, they are still not eligible for these programs. Under Legal Permanent Resident status, if there is proof of a ten-year work history, they are eligible across the board for major federal programs, without any other requirements. Many Marshallese have lived and worked in the United States for over ten years but the question remains: why does their status still prevent them from gaining access to these federal programs, when other Legal Permanent Residents are granted access to these benefits?

Challenges after Migration

Marshallese people are faced with many difficulties after arriving in the U.S. Many are forced to deal with homelessness, discrimination, a lack of job security, cultural and linguistic barriers, or even human rights violations after migrating.

There are also severe disparities in the realm of higher education for Marshallese migrants. The Marshallese are less likely than other Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders to hold a bachelor's degree¹⁷⁷. The push for higher education and retention is not stressed as many young Marshallese work to help out their families. There is little specialized support for this group of Pacific Islanders from public education institutions and the labor force communities. With a high rate of limited English proficiency¹⁷⁸, they also face difficulties when navigating the U.S. labor force system.

This lack of English proficiency and education combined constitute a severe barrier for the Marshallese community. According to the Empowering Pacific Islander Communities Report, among NHPI ethnic groups, Marshallese are least likely to hold a high school diploma or GED than average.¹⁷⁹ This limits their ability to get high paying jobs. Marshallese Americans fare worse than all other groups of Pacific Islanders, almost three-quarters of Marshallese are low-income and about half live in poverty,¹⁸⁰ compared to the national poverty average in the United States, which is 19%.

¹⁷⁶ Siskin, Alison. *Noncitizen Eligibility for Federal Public Assistance: Policy Overview*. Report. Congressional Research Service, 2016. 11. Table A-1

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ *Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders & A Community of Contrasts in the United States*. Report. 2014. Accessed February 8, 2017. http://empoweredpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/A_Community_of_Contrasts_NHPI_US_2014-1.pdf.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

With a lack of English proficiency and education, Marshallese people are at a severe disadvantage within the U.S. system.

Many Marshallese migrants are low-wage workers,¹⁸¹ and with a high poverty rate among the Marshallese community, many cannot afford basic health care due to a lack of access to tax-credits and co-payments. These can make healthcare more affordable in the long run, but many Marshallese are unable to afford even these.¹⁸² The lack of access to these two things alone make healthcare less affordable for the Marshallese community.

Another severe limitation on Marshallese ability to access affordable health care is their ineligibility for federal benefits programs like Medicaid. Although COFA citizens can live in the U.S. freely, after 1996, Marshallese people and other COFA migrants haven't been able to have access to basic federal benefits programs like Medicaid. This is due to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), which restricted COFA citizens access to federal programs. This PRWORA Act excluded COFA citizens from federally funded services based on residency status¹⁸³. Up until 1996, COFA Migrants who came to the United States had access to these federal programs. However, when President Clinton signed the Welfare Reform Act into law, he barred the Marshallese and other nonimmigrant migrants from accessing these programs, leaving it up to state governments to provide for COFA migrants¹⁸⁴. Many states don't realize that these Marshallese communities exist and there is no effort in supporting these people in our communities.

Pamphlet Tool

The tool that we offer in this section is a pamphlet on what the Compact of Free Association (COFA) is, a brief history of the Compact, and the type of status the Marshallese have under the COFA agreement. This pamphlet will be passed out in places where Marshallese work, and to communities where Marshallese live. Having this information clearly laid out is important as Marshallese people should be recognized as vibrant parts of our communities. This pamphlet will allow for a better understanding of who these people are.

The pamphlet presents statistics about the population of Marshallese living in the United States, details on what type of legal status Marshallese living in the U.S. have, and a brief overview of

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸²"Coyayment - HealthCare.gov Glossary." HealthCare.gov. Accessed February 16, 2017. <https://www.healthcare.gov/glossary/co-payment/>.

¹⁸³ "COFA Oregon Fact Sheet" *APANO*. January 2015. Accessed February 10, 2017. http://www.apano.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/COFA_final_singles.pdf

¹⁸⁴Downs, Caleb. "After escaping radioactive fallout and rising ocean levels, now Marshallese migrants in Texas face new problems | Texas." Dallas News. November 25, 2016. Accessed February 10, 2017. <http://www.dallasnews.com/news/texas/2016/11/25/escaped-radioactive-fallout-rising-ocean-levels-now-marshallese-migrants-texas-face-new-problems>.

the context behind the COFA agreement. The pamphlet also highlights how to provide documentation and fill out the I-94 document for working in the U.S. This pamphlet will improve Marshallese migrants' well-being in the U.S. because it will create understanding with these communities in which the Marshallese live and work.



COFA Meeting for WA Residents



Marshallese Outrigger Canoe



Marshallese Elder Speaking

University of Washington
 The Henry M. Jackson
 School of International Studies
 Task Force 2017
 Seattle, WA

YOUR MARSHALLESE NEIGHBORS



United States Government, Department of State "COMPACT OF FREE ASSOCIATION, AS AMENDED, BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS" April 30, 2003. Accessed February 8, 2017: <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/173999.pdf>

Empowering Pacific Islander Communities "Native Hawaiians & Pacific Islanders: A Community of Contrasts" 2014. Accessed February 8, 2017: http://empoweredpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/A_Community_of_Contrasts_NHPI_US_2014-1.pdf

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services "Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Palau" February 3, 2016. Accessed February 8, 2017: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-9-central/complete-correct-form-i-9/complete-section-1-employee-information-and-attestation/federated-states-micronesia-republic-marshall-islands-and-palau>

Photos By: Desiree Gross, Holly Barker

The Compact of Free Association

In 1986

The United States with the Marshall Islands made a mutual agreement, the Compact of Free Association.

Under COFA, the Marshallese are able to freely travel to the United States to work, live, and go to school **without** a visa.

In exchange the United States has military control over two million square miles of ocean and land.

The COFA agreement will expire in 2023.

COFA Status Legal

Non-Immigrant

not citizens or nationals of the U.S



Estimated Population in the United States: 22,000

- 73% Low-Income
- 49% Live in Poverty
- 22% Unemployed
- 31% Warehouse Jobs
- 20% Food Service & Accommodation Jobs
- 90% Renters

Working in the U.S.

- Know that they are eligible to work in the United States as non-immigrants for an unlimited length of time
- Employers should not re-verify an employee who presents an unexpired foreign passport from the RMI that is accompanied by a Form I-94 or Form I-94A



Completing Section 1 of Form I-9:

- Attest to being an “alien authorized to work”
- Enter “N/A” in the Expiration Date of Employment field

Provide unexpired passport, an employment authorization document, or combination of documents from List B/List C, including a driver’s license and an unrestricted Social Security card.

Health Care Aid in the Marshall Islands: *Tools to Build a Partnership for a Sustainable and Effective Health Care System*

“We Pacific Islanders are connected by the largest ocean in the world. Though our language and history may differ, we all share a love for life and family. We get our strength from our elders, our spiritual faith, our traditional practice, and our cultural values that have survived for centuries. Let us strive to preserve these sources of strength by caring for ourselves, our families, and the places in which we live and raise our children”

- Nia Aitaoto,

Co-Director for the Center for Pacific Islander Health, UAMS Northwest

When researching issues pertaining to health care in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, it became clear that the country lacks a sustainable health care system. In order to reduce ill-health, and ensure that Marshallese have access to a comprehensive health care system, we have crafted three separate tools:

- 1) A list of partners and collaborators who can help by donating their time, resources, and capacity.
- 2) Case statements that can be used in conjunction with the list of partners and collaborators. These case statements demonstrate how the mission of each organization matches the goal of a sustainable health care system in the RMI, and why they should direct attention to the RMI in particular.
- 3) A scholarship proposal that is targeted towards attracting Marshallese students to the UW, with the hopes that those students would go on to develop the health care system in the RMI in some way.

Health and Illness in the Marshall Islands

Between 1946 and 1958, the United States detonated sixty-seven nuclear weapons testing the “effects of radiation and the potential of its new weapons”¹⁸⁵, disregarding the impact these tests would later have on the residents on the Marshallese Islands. These tests subjected the beautiful Marshallese islands to devastating levels of nuclear radiation.

There is considerable evidence to support the conclusion that radiation (through tissue absorption) affected individuals alive between the years of 1948 and 1970 in the Marshall Islands.¹⁸⁶ Thyroid, stomach, colon and leukemia are the four most common types of cancer related to the nuclear fallout in the Marshall

¹⁸⁵ Barker, Holly M. *Bravo for the Marshallese: regaining control in a post-nuclear, post-colonial world*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson, 2013, 5.

¹⁸⁶ "Dose Estimation and Predicted Risk for Marshall Islands Residents." Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics - National Cancer Institute. Accessed February 07, 2017. https://dceg.cancer.gov/research/how-we-study/exposure-assessment/nci-dose-estimation-predicted-cancer-risk-residents-marshall-islands#summary_analyses

Islands.¹⁸⁷ Based on Figure 1.1, cancer and diabetes, two non-communicable diseases were the top leading causes of death in the Marshall Islands from 2003 to 2012. Figure 1.1 also lists other U.S.-affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPI) cities in Oceania where 47.9% of all deaths were due to Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), while NCDs accounted for 23.6% in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and 60.4% in Guam.¹⁸⁸

Figure 1.1

Deaths Due to Non-Communicable Disease (NCD)-Related Conditions, US-affiliated Pacific Islands, 2003–2010

NCD	AS ^a	CNMI ^b	FSM ^c	RMI ^d	Guam	ROP ^e	Total
	n	n	n	n	n	n	
Heart Disease	92	82	465	19	661	118	1,437
Hypertension	28	0	86	28	0	0	142
Cerebrovascular	81	55	52	10	158	30	386
Cancer	109	62	131	72	324	93	791
Renal Disease	0	41	23	23	40	27	154
Diabetes	99	0	259	64	79	0	501
Total NCD deaths	409	240	1,016	216	1,262	268	3,411
Total Deaths all causes	758	491	2,391	914	2,088	485	7,127
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Percent NCD deaths	54.0	48.9	42.5	23.6	60.4	55.3	47.9

^aAmerican Samoa.

^bCommonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

^cFederated States of Micronesia.

^dRepublic of the Marshall Islands.

^eRepublic of Palau. Data source: See individual site articles in this supplemental issue

Because nuclear radiation caused severe harm to the viability of agriculture in the Marshall Islands, the Marshallese must rely on imported food supplies, which increases rates of diabetes and obesity.

¹⁸⁷ Simon, Steven L., André Bouville, Charles E. Land, and Harold L. Beck. "RADIATION DOSES AND CANCER RISKS IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS ASSOCIATED WITH EXPOSURE TO RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT FROM BIKINI AND ENEWETAK NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTS: SUMMARY." Health physics. August 2010. Accessed February 21, 2017. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4042840/>.

¹⁸⁸ Aitaoto, Nia, and Henry M. Ichiho. "Assessing the Health Care System of Services for Non-Communicable Diseases in the US-affiliated Pacific Islands: A Pacific Regional Perspective." *Hawai'i Journal of Medicine & Public Health*. May 2013. Accessed February 07, 2017. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3689460/>.

Approximately 80-90% of all calories consumed in the RMI are from imported foods.¹⁸⁹ The proportion of obese and overweight women is particularly pronounced, as they account for more of the population than both underweight and average weight women. According to a 1991 National Nutrition Survey, 9% of non-pregnant women were underweight, 30% were overweight and 31% were obese.¹⁹⁰ The rate of obesity is increasing, and obesity has a strong positive correlation to diabetes.

Before the nuclear tests, a traditional Marshallese diet consisted of healthy, non-imported foods including local seafood and edible plants. Now, due to a lack of access to RMI-grown produce, fruits and vegetables must be imported to the country at high prices.¹⁹¹ Another significant facet of health and diet is the dependence on white rice as a diet staple. White rice is appealing because imported food is cheaper than local foods.¹⁹² Marshallese typically eat white rice¹⁹³ which has a glycemic index rating of 83, higher than that of white table sugar at only 68.¹⁹⁴ As shown in Figure 1.2, obesity rates among women aged 20 and above are at 53.9%, and 38.8% of men are obese in the Marshall Islands. This is a shocking statistic when compared to the global rates of obesity for that same age cohort, which is only 6.8% for women, and 5.1% for men. Untreated diabetes can have severe ramifications on health, such as blindness, amputation of body parts, or other impairments.¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁹ Brenda Davis. RD. "Defeating Diabetes: Lessons From the Marshall Islands." *Today's Dietitian: The Magazine for Nutrition Professionals*. Accessed February 20, 2017. <http://www.todaysdietitian.com/newarchives/072508p24.shtml>

¹⁹⁰ "Marshall Islands" *The World Health Organization*. <http://www.wpro.who.int/nutrition/documents/docs/msi.pdf>

¹⁹¹ Hollyer, James R. "Making positive and permanent steps toward reducing the prevalence of non-communicable diseases in the Republic of the Marshall Islands through increased production and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables" <http://photos.state.gov/libraries/marshallislands/19452/pdfs/us-embassy-rmi-report-2014.pdf>

¹⁹² Connell, John . "Food security in the island Pacific: Is Micronesia as far away as ever?" *Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg* 2014. <http://www.pacificcancer.org/pacp-resources/food-nutrition-physical-activity/FSnCH/Food%20security%20in%20the%20island%20Pacific%20-%20Is%20Micronesia%20as%20far%20away%20as%20ever.%20Reg%20Environ%20Change%202014.09.28.pdf>

¹⁹³ "Rice Madness." Yokwe Online Main. Accessed February 20, 2017. <http://www.yokwe.net/index.php/index.php?module=Dizkus&func=viewtopic&topic=1225>

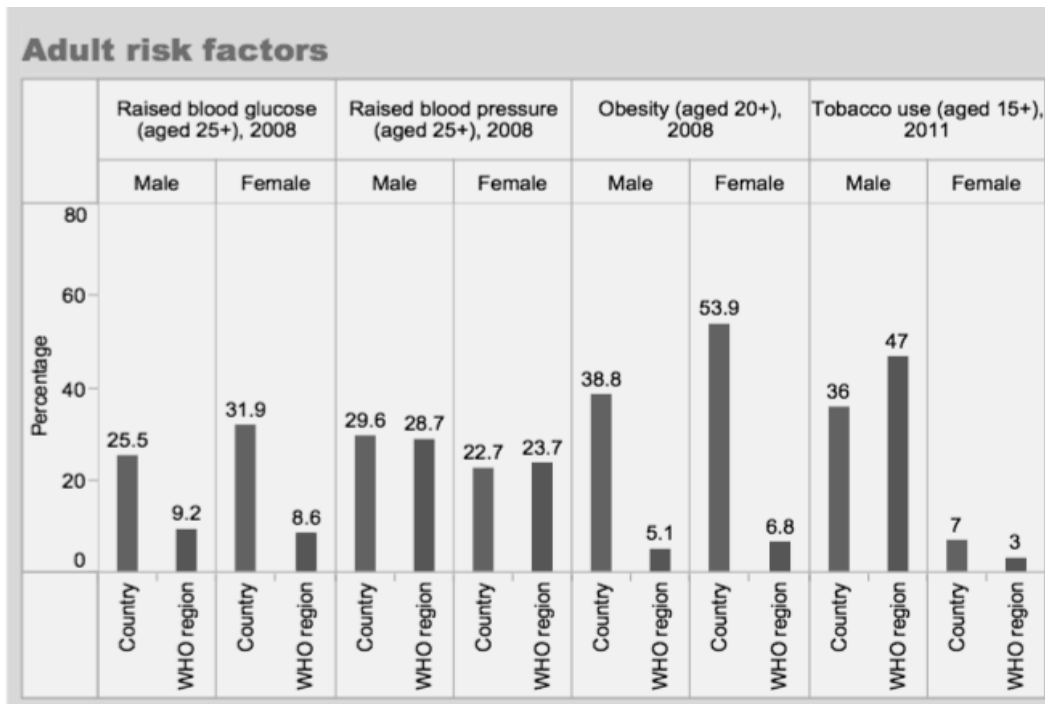
¹⁹⁴ Davis, Brenda. RD. "Defeating Diabetes: Lessons From the Marshall Islands." *Today's Dietitian: The Magazine for Nutrition Professionals*. Accessed February 20, 2017. <http://www.todaysdietitian.com/newarchives/072508p24.shtml>

¹⁹⁵ "Marshall Islanders: Migration Patterns and Health-Care Challenges." *Migrationpolicy.org*. September 24, 2014. Accessed February 07, 2017. <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/marshall-islanders-migration-patterns-and-health-care-challenges>

One identifiable reason why diabetes is so pervasive in the RMI is that the Marshallese do not have easy access to preventative treatment in their home islands. In addition, because the islands' health staff, services, and facilities are insufficient, many patients cannot enter into effective and affordable treatment. Approximately half of the surgeries consist of amputations on the Marshall Islands because of the complications of diabetes and the lack of renal dialysis facilities.¹⁹⁶

In sum, because radiation is still permeating land in the RMI, (resulting in a significant lack of agricultural production) people have been forced to rely on imported and processed foods, which leads to increased diet related diabetes and heart disease.

Figure 1.2



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¹⁹⁶ Davis, Brenda. RD. "Defeating Diabetes: Lessons From the Marshall Islands." *Today's Dietitian: The Magazine for Nutrition Professionals*. Accessed February 20, 2017. <http://www.todaysdietitian.com/newarchives/072508p24.shtml>

¹⁹⁷ "Marshall Islands: WHO statistical profile." World Health Organization <http://www.who.int/gho/countries/mhl.pdf>

However, this phenomenon of high diabetes rates among Marshallese people is not isolated to those living in the RMI, but rather holds true across Marshallese populations that have migrated to the U.S.

Disability Adjusted Life Year (DALY), a metric that quantifies unproductive years due to disease, or disability has measured similarly high rates of diabetes among Marshallese in the U.S.¹⁹⁸ Among Marshallese in Arkansas, and elsewhere 10.25% of total DALYs of Marshallese citizens is due to diabetes, causing 12.03% of all deaths¹⁹⁹.

The nuclear tests have also led to long term psychosocial disease. In many cases, Marshallese people have lost their homes and sense of security. The subsequent change in the cultural value system has also led to increased consumption of tobacco products and alcohol, and an increase in unprotected sex.²⁰⁰ Furthermore, this increased sexual contact has contributed to the spread of pathogens, such as human papillomavirus and hepatitis B virus, both of which can lead to cancer.²⁰¹ In sum, whether by radiation or lifestyle the U.S. nuclear tests have changed the culture and the health of the Marshallese.

Current Health Care System in the RMI

The overall poor health of the Marshallese is partially reflected by the gaps in the public health care system. The Marshall Islands Ministry of Health manages the infrastructure, services, and resources of the health care system. As of 2011, there are two major hospitals in areas with the densest populations (Majuro and Ebeye) in addition to 60 smaller health centers that are scattered throughout the islands.²⁰² The Ministry of Health's 15 year strategic plan includes strengthening the health care system's efficiency and networks as well as addressing a number of specific problems. One of these priorities is to "reduce population growth and urban densities," particularly in terms of the poor living conditions on the island of Ebeye.²⁰³ Another priority is to "address, prevent and manage the rising number of cases of diabetes and their health and social impact".²⁰⁴

This intention to improve the health and sanitation conditions in the Marshall Islands also aligns with our goal as a Task Force, which is why we have created tools that will ensure that aid organizations and institutions assist the Ministry of Health to provide a sustainable health care

¹⁹⁸ Metrics: Disability-Adjusted Life Year (DALY). (n.d.). *The World Health Organization* Retrieved February 07, 2017. http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/metrics_daly/en/

¹⁹⁹ "GBD Compare." Data Visualizations. Accessed February 07, 2017. <http://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare/search> Marshall Islands.

²⁰⁰ Seiji Yamada. "Cancer, reproductive abnormalities, and diabetes in Micronesia: the effect of nuclear testing." *PACIFIC HEALTH DIALOG* Vol 11. No. 2. 2004. <http://pacifichealthdialog.org.fj/Volume2011/no2/PHD1120220p2162022120Yamada20orig.pdf>

²⁰¹ "Country Health Information Profile: Marshall Islands," *The World Health Organization*, (2011): 207. http://www.wpro.who.int/countries/mhl/16MSIpro2011_finaldraft.pdf

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid, 209.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

system. One of the barriers to achieving these Ministry of Health priorities is the lack of government funding for health care services. One potential source of funding is foreign aid. Aid is primarily distributed from private organizations and international sources, such as the U.S. Federal Government, World Health Organization, Secretariat of the Pacific Communities, and the Taiwanese Government.²⁰⁵ Such aid services, while necessary, may threaten the economic sustainability of the Marshall Islands because of the reliance on foreign aid.

One of the largest barriers to efficient health care services is the geographic distribution of the Marshall Islands. Spread over 750,000 square miles, the habitable land mass of the Marshall Islands is only 70 square miles.²⁰⁶ As a result, the delivery and allocation of medicine and services are extremely costly. Delivery of medicine to health posts is very difficult given the wide distribution of posts throughout the region, in addition to the time and effort required for an individual to seek medical services. Because of these difficulties, and the severity of health issues, many Marshallese are driven to relocate to the United States to seek health care treatment and preventative care.



Source: National Geographic

The global burden of disease is unequally distributed between the global north and the global south. This is clearly palpable in the Marshall Islands where citizens have suffered long term health consequences as a result of nuclear testing performed by the U.S. The U.S. not only explicitly benefited from the scientific knowledge brought about from the nuclear testing, but also was able to do so in a geostrategic region far from mainland soil where the adverse health effects were avoided. Coupled with the high rates of cancer and diabetes, the health care system today in the Marshall

²⁰⁵ Nia Aitaoto and Henry M Ichiho, “Assessing the Health Care system of Services for Non-Communicable Diseases in the US-affiliated Pacific Islands: A Pacific Regional Perspective” *Hawai’i Journal of Medicine & Public Health*, no. 72 (2013): 106-114, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3689460/>

²⁰⁶ “Country Health Information Profile”, 207.

Islands inadequately provides care for its citizens. A recent report published by the World Health Organization estimated that 20%-40% of health resources are being wasted or improperly utilized.²⁰⁷ A study published by the *Hawaii Journal of Medicine and Public Health* determined that the top issues the RMI's health care system faces is a fragmented methodology for care and diagnosis, evident by the number of patients who receive care once but do not return for continuation of treatment.²⁰⁸ The health care system also faces problems with inconsistency in treatment availability, especially for patients suffering from diabetes and non-communicable diseases.²⁰⁹

As mentioned above, much of the soil once used for agriculture in the RMI is now too contaminated with radiation to grow crops. Marshallese have shifted their dietary habits from locally produced to imported food leading to an increase in obesity and diabetes.²¹⁰ In addition to dietary habits, there seems to be a discrepancy in disease prevention, lending Marshallese people the reputation that they perceive care as “present crisis-oriented.”²¹¹ In other words, Marshallese tend to seek care only when in absolute need.²¹² In order to best address the health problems in the Marshall Islands, the health care system must be restructured to cater towards Marshallese needs for effective treatment and prevention of ill-health.

The inadequacy of the health care system is evident by the mass number of Marshallese that have emigrated away from the islands in search of better health care treatment and services. Since the Compact of Free Association (COFA), which provides partial U.S. citizenship to the Marshallese, was passed in 1986 there has been an influx of Marshallese moving to the U.S. However, rather than obtaining treatment for their failing health once in the U.S., many Marshallese are prevented from accessing health care services because they are not U.S. citizens.

Current Aid and Governmental Work in the RMI

The Republic of the Marshall Islands is home to several NGOs and government-sanctioned organizations. These organizations attempt to assist the Marshall Islands in child welfare and disaster management, such as water, sanitation and hygiene improvement. Unfortunately, many of the larger organizations that can provide funds for health care or other forms of assistance do not seem to currently work in or focus on the RMI. In the following section, we list how several key agencies are

²⁰⁷ “WHO Country Cooperation Strategy for Marshall Islands 2013-2017”, *The World Health Organization* (2012): 17. http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/206584/1/CCS_MHL_2013-2017_eng.pdf, 17.

²⁰⁸ Aitaoto, 112.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 110.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 112.

²¹¹ Jin Young Choi. “Seeking Health Care: Marshallese Migrants in Hawai’i,” *Taylor & Francis Online* 13, no. 1 (2008) <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13557850701803171>

²¹² Ibid.

currently involved in the RMI, and outline how these agencies could further engage in improving health conditions in the RMI.

The **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** provides humanitarian relief for countries that need assistance after natural disasters. Currently, USAID has projects that are largely focused on climate change and disaster mitigation in the Marshall Islands. According to USAID, a large amount of the drinking water sources in the RMI are labelled as “undrinkable” due to the high salinity level from both El Niño and below average rainfall, a byproduct of climate change.²¹³ One of USAID’s main goals is to help build a strong disaster preparedness plan along with supplying relief and reconstruction as provided under COFA²¹⁴.

For the Oceania region specifically, USAID's goal is to provide funds to help humanitarian causes and provide relief from natural disasters. Their primary focus in the health care sector is on providing assistance to mitigate the effects of HIV and AIDS in Papua New Guinea. In addition to its program in Papua New Guinea, it would be beneficial if USAID were to expand its health care program to include the RMI. If USAID were to allocate funds to improve sustainable health care in the RMI, providing education about diabetes, cancer, and preventive medicine in relation to the environment, it would address the majority of their current problems.

The **Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (PIANGO)** is an umbrella organization for countries that are eligible to receive assistance from NGOs working with PIANGO. Their mission is “strong and effective civil society leadership exercised for a sustainable, just, compassionate and peaceful Pacific community”.²¹⁵ The Republic of the Marshall Islands is an active member of PIANGO. PIANGO's areas of focus according to their 2013-2015 plan include "strengthening Civil Society Organization platforms in the Pacific, development effectiveness, evidence-based policy advocacy and Pacific developmental leadership."²¹⁶ According to PIANGO’s website, they have a commitment to positive sustainable change as demonstrated by their decolonization programs.²¹⁷ That said, it would be beneficial for both private and public organizations to work with PIANGO to create a sustainable health care program for a self-sufficient health care system in the Marshall Islands, not only because it seems to be an area lacking within NGO work in the RMI, but because it correlates with PIANGO’s mission statement.

²¹³ "Marshall Islands, Republic of." Disaster Assistance U.S. Agency for International Development. Last modified August 25, 2016. Accessed January 23, 2017. <https://www.usaid.gov/crisis/rmi>.

²¹⁴ United States of America. USAID. *Pacific Islands Regional Profile*. Accessed January 23, 2017. https://scms.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1861/PacificIslands_Country_Profile1.pdf.

²¹⁵ Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations. *PIANGO Strategic Plan 2013-2015*. Suva, Fiji: PIANGO, 2013, 3. <http://www.piango.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/PIANGO-Strategic-Plan-2013-2015.pdf>

²¹⁶ Ibid., 7.

²¹⁷ Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations. "Decolonization - Self Determination – PIANGO." PIANGO. November 16, 2016. Accessed January 20, 2017. <http://www.piango.org/uncategorized/decolonization-self-determination/>.

The current focus of the **United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF)** is largely centered on rebuilding Oceania communities (by providing emergency supplies) after Cyclone Winston in the Pacific Islands²¹⁸. However, specifically in the Marshall Islands, a main focus of UNICEF's Child Protection Systems is focused on bringing attention to child neglect and abuse²¹⁹. Like USAID, UNICEF is not focused on holistic health care work in the RMI. While UNICEF's current work is important, providing resources for preventative health care could give the RMI a better foundation for sustainability and response when natural disasters occur.

The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)**, while not an NGO, has lent the RMI funds in the past – specifically for the purpose of reducing poverty and improving health.²²⁰ Loan 1316-RMI[SF] was executed after discovering that the RMI had a larger percentage of infectious and chronic diseases than typical for the region.²²¹ The goal for the loan was to create a “shift [in] the emphasis of health service provision from expensive curative services to preventive services based on a primary health care (PHC) approach” in the RMI.²²² This loan took place in 2005 and despite the initial purpose of the loan, the RMI are still experiencing high rates of health care problems, especially due to both the lack of health services and the lack of domestically grown foods. The loan from the ADB went towards support for primary health care, providing infrastructure for medical centers on the outer islands and providing funds alongside support to implement these projects.²²³ Bruce Murray, the Director General of the Operations Evaluation Department in the Asian Development Bank, noted the following about health care aid in the RMI:

The RMI’s health problems have deep structural roots in the limitations of an atoll environment, urban overcrowding, cultural breakdown in urban areas, poor water and sanitation, external dependency, low levels of education among the population, poverty, lack of available and affordable nutritious food, and cultural beliefs about health. These problems suggest that health should be approached as a cross-cutting issue, integrated into non-health sectors including education, water and sanitation, waste management, housing, and renewable energy.²²⁴

²¹⁸ "News Updates." UNICEF - Pacific Island Countries Home page. Accessed January 23, 2017. <https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/>.

²¹⁹United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund. *Looking Back, Moving Forward: A Snapshot of UNICEF's Work for Pacific Island Children 2015-2016*. Suva, Fiji: UNICEF Pacific, 14. <https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/Look Back Moving Forward final web.pdf>

²²⁰*Health and Population Project (Loan 1316-RMI[SF]) in the Marshall Islands*. Asian Development Bank: Performance Evaluation Report, 2005, iii. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/evaluation-document/35134/files/26322-rmi-ppe.pdf>

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid., iv.

It would be beneficial if any monetary loan or funds that are allocated to the RMI would provide assistance in supporting a self-sustainable health system that can be maintained without influence from other countries, such as the United States.

Humanium is an NGO whose primary focus is on advocating for children's rights and preventing children's human rights violations.²²⁵ Additionally, they do work in Marshall Islands to provide access to clean, drinkable water.²²⁶ Similarly the Secretariat of the Pacific Communities' Water Sanitation Program is an organization that, like Humanium, focuses on providing clean water to the Pacific.²²⁷ The RMI is one of the countries that Humanium focuses on, as freshwater sources in the RMI are finite, especially on the islands of Majuro and Ebeye, due to their dense population.²²⁸ There are five particular problems that the Pacific Community Water Sanitation Program focuses on inside of the RMI including "insufficient quantity, challenged public utilities, contamination, weak conservation and demand management and non-integrated management".²²⁹ The RMI's Ministry of Health and aid organization have similar goals, but both fall short of their intended outcomes.

Health care services and opportunities are needed within the RMI. As shown by the organizations above, health services are a concern that are touched on lightly, however, the larger concern for most of the organizations are focused explicitly on youth health care or rights or on access to clean water. While these are important issues, it's discernable that *holistic health services* are desperately needed in the RMI. Through networking with private and public partner organizations and reaching out to NGOs that are currently working in the RMI, a sustainable, self-reliant healthcare system is an attainable goal.

Toolkit Structure

The toolkit we have created has two components: the first entails a list of aid organizations that work globally for health, sanitation, and economic development as well as example case statements that can be sent to these aid organizations urging them to implement their programs in the Marshall Islands. The second component includes a model scholarship that the University of Washington or other universities may adopt to encourage college degree seeking Marshallese who may one day pursue a career in medicine and eventually aid the crippled health care system in the

²²⁵"Humanium – Together for Children's Rights." Humanium Together for Children's Rights. Accessed January 23, 2017. <http://www.humanium.org/en/>.

²²⁶ "Children of the Marshall Islands." Humanium Together for Children's Rights. Accessed January 23, 2017. <http://www.humanium.org/en/asia-pacific/marshall-islands-2/>.

²²⁷Pacific Water SOPAC. "SPC Water, Sanitation and Hygiene." SPC Water, Sanitation and Hygiene. Accessed January 23, 2017. <http://www.pacificwater.org/index.cfm>.

²²⁸Pacific Water SOPAC. "Integrated Water Management & Development Plan for Laura Groundwater Lens, Majuro Atoll." SPC Water, Sanitation and Hygiene. Accessed January 23, 2017, 2. http://www.pacificwater.org/userfiles/file/GEF%20IWRM%20Final%20Docs/Final%20Formatted%20Laura_Demonstration_Concept_Paper_2NDFINAL_101107.pdf

²²⁹Pacific Water SOPAC. "SPC Water, Sanitation and Hygiene : Republic of the Marshall Islands." SPC Water, Sanitation and Hygiene : Republic of the Marshall Islands. Accessed January 23, 2017. <http://www.pacificwater.org/pages.cfm/country-information/republic-of-marshall-islands.html>.

Marshall Islands. The goal of these tools is to lay the foundation for an effective and sustainable health care system in the Marshall Islands.

Both tools aim to address the long term health consequences of nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands by harnessing the capacity of aid organizations and educational institutions. Urging aid organizations to take action in the Marshall Islands would lead to the implementation of direct health services, while educational scholarships would ensure a future of sustainable health care.

List of Potential Partners and Collaborators Benefiting Healthcare in the RMI

Creating a structurally sound and self-sustainable healthcare system in the RMI is imperative, especially in order to decrease the necessity for the Marshallese people to leave their homes in search of access to high quality health care facilities. Creating a self-sustainable healthcare system is a project that is going to take collaboration between public and private organizations to accomplish.

This list is comprised of two categories of organizations; partners, the “on-the-ground” crew who will physically complete the work and the collaborators who will fund the work being done. Some of these organizations have completed work in the RMI previously, and some are organizations with which the RMI can seek to initiate a relationship. This list of potential partners and collaborators contains both public and private organizations that have donated capital to healthcare causes to countries that are in need. In combination with the case statements provided below, the organizations on this list can be used as recipients for the preliminary case statements we’ve prepared.

Potential Partners

Organizations Name	Mission	Countries or Regions of Work	Finances (USD)	Contact Information or Website Link
Australian Government's Aid Program to the Republic of the Marshall Islands	"As a regional neighbor, Australia is well placed to work closely with the Marshall Islands Government to support RMI's development efforts"	The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)	\$10 million annual funding	http://dfat.gov.au/geo/republic-of-marshall-islands/development-assistance/Pages/development-assistance-in-the-republic-of-the-marshall-islands.aspx
Youth to Youth in Health	NGO dedicated to providing young people in the RMI "knowledge, skills, and self-esteem, and provides young people with a safe and supportive learning and professional environment...to empower young people to proactively participate in the continued development of their communities and nation".	The RMI	\$583,000 annual funding	https://www.facebook.com/pg/Jodrikdrik/about/?ref=page_internal
Oxfam	Works in various countries around the world to end poverty and injustice	Programs in the Pacific Islands, etc.	\$90 million USD into programs, 6.3% went to Asia & The Pacific	https://www.oxfamamerica.org/
Amnesty International	Works in over 150 countries to end human rights abuses	United Kingdom	\$86.9 million 2015 income	http://www.amnestyusa.org/
Global Aid Against Poverty	Provides economic, health, food and emergency relief worldwide	India, Asia, Middle East, Africa, South America, West Europe	(unknown)	(206) 428-8836 omary.101@gaapusa.org http://www.gaapus.org/index.html
Habitat for Humanity	"Build[s] strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter"	70 countries in North America, South America, Africa, Asia & the Pacific	\$237 million 2015 income	Phone: (206) 453-2950 www.seattle-habitat.org

Health Alliance International	Supports government partners in strengthening public sector primary health care	Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Eurasia, the Caribbean	Program budgets range from \$20,000 - 1,000,000	http://www.healthallianceinternational.org/
Infectious Disease Research Institute (IDRI)	A non-profit based in Seattle that conducts research and product development of vaccines, diagnostic tools, and therapeutics for the most underserved populations worldwide	Works in partnership globally	Received a \$15 million donation from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	206-858-6068 idri.mfg@idri.org http://www.idri.org/
Initiative for Global Development	“A nonprofit organization that engages and harnesses the power of the private sector to create sustainable development and inclusive growth in Africa”	Africa	(unknown)	202-454-3972 www.igdleaders.org
Northwest Student Exchange	“A nonprofit organization founded in 1987 in Seattle, cooperating with schools, local and international communities to create and coordinate cultural exchange.	United States partnering globally	(2013) \$1,624,604 total revenue	www.nwse.com
Partners Asia	“Supports community initiatives to improve the lives of the most vulnerable among the people of Myanmar... we build relationships with innovative organizers in these communities and with international donors, bridging the gap between local leaders and global resources”	Myanmar and its bordering countries	(2013) \$2,340,932 total revenue	http://partnersasia.org
PATH	“Path is the leader in global health innovation. An international nonprofit organization, we save lives and improve health, especially among women and children”	China and SE Asia, West Africa, South America	Approximately \$300 million revenue	http://www.path.org/
World Concern	“Christian world relief and development agency extending opportunity and hope to people facing extreme poverty”		(2014) \$2,012,510 total revenue	
Heart to Heart International	“Strengthens communities through improving health access, providing humanitarian development and administering crisis relief worldwide.”	130 countries	\$134,000,000 in 2015	http://www.hearttoheart.org

Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI)	A chartered non-government, not-for-profit organization that works to advance the causes and improve the lives of Marshallese women and their families in political, economic and social opportunities	Pacific countries	\$320 million over 10 years	http://www.pacificwomen.org
National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (NCCCP)	“ <i>Comprehensive cancer control</i> is a strategic approach to preventing or minimizing the impact of cancer in communities”	in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, 7 tribes and tribal organizations, and 7 U.S. territories and Pacific Island Jurisdictions.	(unknown)	https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/ncccp/
The Pacific Partnership for Deaf-Blind Technical Assistance Services (PDB)	“The project works to increase the capacity of educational agencies to improve the results for children and young adults who are deaf-blind and their families to live, attend school, play, work and have friends in their communities.”	University of Hawaii and the outlying Pacific Island nations/jurisdictions of American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Republic of Palau and RMI.	(unknown)	http://www.pdb.hawaii.edu
Nuclear age peace foundation	“Our mission is to educate and advocate for peace and world free of nuclear weapons, and to empower peace leaders.”	United Nations and is comprised of over 75,000 individuals and groups worldwide	\$3.611.631 in 2015	https://www.wagingpeace.org
Marshall Islands Science Foundation Program	“In keeping with efforts to support the scholastic endeavors of young Marshallese people”	attend a U.S. accredited college or university	(unknown)	https://marshallislands.llnl.gov/foundation.php

Potential Collaborators

Foundation Name	Mission/Focus Areas	Region of Focus ²³⁰	Total Funding in 2015 ²³¹	Organization's Website
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	"We believe that by giving people the tools to lead healthy productive lives, we can help them lift themselves out of poverty."	Africa, China, Europe, India, Middle East	a. \$5,522,604,418 b. \$3,860,217,004	http://www.gatesfoundation.org
The Ford Foundation	"We believe in the inherent dignity of all people. But around the world, too many people are excluded from the political, economic, and social institutions that shape their lives."	Andean Region, Brazil, China, Eastern Africa, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Central America, Mexico, Middle East, North Africa, South Africa, United States, West Africa	a. \$613,199,744 b. \$511,984,277	https://www.fordfoundation.org
The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation	"At the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, we believe that good health and health care are fundamental measures of our success as a nation."	United States, Europe	a. \$318,482,898 b. \$347,592,920	http://www.rwjf.org/en.html
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	"The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation is a nonpartisan, private charitable foundation that advances ideas and supports institutions to promote a better world."	United States, Developing Countries	a. \$401,823,025 b. \$356,998,235	http://www.hewlett.org
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation	"Supporting creative people, effective institutions, and influential networks building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world."	United States, Europe, Asia, Central America, Africa, Oceania	a. \$321,920,374 b. \$256,573,478	https://www.macfoundation.org
Bloomberg Philanthropies	"Leading from the front, spreading solutions that work, in God we trust; everyone else bring data, advocacy, partnerships, cities"	N/A	N/A	https://www.bloomberg.org

²³⁰ Please note that "N/A" notes that no information was available.

²³¹ Please reference total funding as such:

- a. Contributions, gifts, grants paid per books
- b. Contributions, gifts grants paid as disbursements for charitable purposes on a cash basis only
- c. No distinction was made

N/A. No information was available

The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust	“The Helmsley Charitable Trust aspires to improve lives by supporting exceptional efforts in the U.S. and around the world in health, selected place-based initiatives, and education and human services.”	United States, Israel, Ecuador, Mexico, Madagascar, Myanmar	a. \$333,426,831 b. \$279,860,676	http://www.helmsleytrust.org
The Rockefeller Foundation	“Promoting the well-being of humanity throughout the world”	United States, India, Ireland, Puerto Rico, New Zealand, Serbia, Portugal, Ghana, Lebanon, Denmark, Greece	a. \$196,589,522 b. \$166,188,272	https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation	“The Mott Foundation supports efforts that promote a just, equitable and sustainable society.”	United States, Central & Eastern Europe, South Africa	a. \$90,763,105 ²³² b. \$72,899,255	https://www.mott.org
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation	“Relieve the suffering, the distressed and the destitute.” “Improving the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable people throughout the world”	N/A	a. \$114,340,968 b. \$106,875,238	https://www.hiltonfoundation.org
GE Foundation	“We empower people by helping them build the skills they need to succeed in a global economy. We equip communities with the technology and capacity to improve access to better health and education. We elevate ideas that are tackling the world’s toughest challenges to advance economic development and improve lives.”	United States, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, South Asia	a. \$102,034,954 b. \$106,397,515	http://www.gefoundation.com
The Clinton Foundation	“We believe that the best way to unlock human potential is through the power of creative collaboration.”	United States, Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean	c. \$5,160,385 ²³³	https://www.clintonfoundation.org
The Carter Center	“The Carter Center, in partnership with Emory University, is guided by a fundamental commitment to human rights and the alleviation of human suffering. It seeks to prevent and resolve conflicts, enhance	United States, Canada, Central America, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia, Oceania	c. \$8,323,006 ²³⁴	https://www.cartercenter.org

²³² The most current financial information for Charles Stewart Mott Foundation was from 2014 for both a & b.

²³³ Most current financial statement for The Clinton Foundation is 2014.

²³⁴ Most current financial statement for The Carter Center is 2014.

	freedom and democracy, and improve health.”			
United Nations Foundation	“The United Nations Foundation links the UN’s work with others around the world, mobilizing the energy and expertise of business and non-governmental organizations to help the UN tackle issues including climate change, global health, peace and security, women’s empowerment, poverty eradication, energy access, and U.S.-UN relations.”	N/A	c. \$63,210,163	http://www.unfoundation.org
MasterCard Foundation	“The MasterCard Foundation seeks a world where everyone has the opportunity to learn and prosper. All people, no matter their starting point in life, should have an equal chance to succeed. We believe that with access to education, financial services, and skills training, people can have that chance. Our focus is helping economically disadvantaged young people in Africa find opportunities to move themselves, their families and their communities out of poverty and to a better life.”	United States, Africa, Canada, Central America, Haiti, Nepal, Lebanon	c. \$186,453,404	http://www.mastercardfdn.org
Comic Relief	Our mission: To drive positive change through the power of entertainment. Since we first set up shop in 1985, we’ve been doing three main things... two big campaigns, tackling poverty and injustice, raising awareness.”	United Kingdom, Africa, Middle East, Asia, Central America, Oceania	c. £112,961 (Approx. \$141,607.91)	http://www.comicrelief.com
Rockefeller Brothers Fund	“The Rockefeller Brothers Fund advances social change that contributes to a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world.”	United States, Canada, Europe, Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, Caribbean and Australia	c. \$36,326,518	http://www.rbf.org
Adelson Medical Research Foundation	“The Dr. Miriam and Sheldon G. Adelson Medical Research Foundation is a private foundation committed to a model of open and highly integrated collaboration among outstanding investigators who participate in goal-directed basic and clinical research to prevent, reduce or eliminate	N/A	a. \$50,977,421 b. \$50,977,421	http://www.adelsonfoundation.org/amrfphil.html

	disabling and life-threatening illness.”			
Drosos Foundation	“Every individual bears the responsibility for himself, for others, for the environment. Drosos Foundation is committed to enabling disadvantaged children, young people and young adults to take control of their lives and make a positive contribution within their community. The Foundation promotes skills and creates living conditions which enable these people to fulfil their responsibilities.”	Europe, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Middle East, North Africa	N/A	https://drosos.org/en/
The Nippon Foundation	“Our mission is social innovation. Through this innovation we aim to achieve a society where all people support one another, reducing the burdens and challenges they face together.”	Asia, Africa, Brazil, Australia	N/A	http://www.nippon-foundation.or.jp/en/

Case Statements

Urging public and private organizations to take action in the RMI

Introduction

The following documents are Case Statements that are designed to raise awareness about specific problems related to health in the RMI that aid organizations would be best equipped to address. The statements address the problem, area of need, and suggestions of what a pathway forward might look like. While brief, these statements concisely provide accurate data relevant to the proposed issue.

The three areas of focus chosen here include cancer care, diabetes prevention, and sanitation improvement. These areas of focus constitute only a small portion of the many large scale problems facing the RMI. They are therefore intended to lay the foundation for an aid organizations to direct programming in order to solidify impactful change. It is our hope that the list of partners and collaborators can be used as a guide to deliver the case statements. The following case statements are illustrative and are intended to be used as an example of the kind of work that partners and collaborators can complete should they choose to work with the RMI.

Cancer within the Marshallese Population -- MacArthur Foundation

Cancer is an undeniable epidemic plaguing around the world. However, in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, a tragic nuclear history has caused an exceptional number of cancer cases. Between 1946 and 1958, the U.S. government detonated a series of 67 atomic bomb tests in the country. However, one test in particular was especially impactful.²³⁵ On March 1, 1954 the United States military detonated a nuclear weapon, "Castle Bravo," that exposed thousands of Marshallese people to 15 megatons of nuclear fallout.²³⁶ The world witnessed the consequences of nuclear weapons during World War II, but the Bravo test was 1,000 times more powerful than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki--with few watching to bare witness. High rates of cancer have

²³⁵Skoog, Kim. "U.S. Nuclear Testing on the Marshall Islands: 1946 to 1958." *Teaching Ethics* 3, no. 2 (2003): 67-81. Accessed January 29, 2017. <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B3zMZRL-RAMGOW83VzJ2clNoT3c>

²³⁶Burr, William. "60th Anniversary of Castle BRAVO Nuclear Test, the Worst Nuclear Test in U.S. History." The National Security Archive. February 28, 2014. Accessed February 09, 2017. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb459/>.

developed from the nuclear fallout of this test (and subsequent nuclear testings). Cancer treatment for those affected is not only expensive, but is typically found only after relocating to the United States, or another country that has advanced cancer treatment technology. This is due to the fact that advanced cancer treatment, such as radiation therapy and chemotherapy, are not available in the Marshall Islands.²³⁷

As of 2014, the World Health Organization noted that radiotherapy and chemotherapy are two treatments that are not generally available to those under the Marshallese public healthcare system.²³⁸ Instead, oral morphine is supplied only as a tool for pain management, thus treating the symptoms instead of treating the disease.²³⁹ The Cancer Council of the Pacific Islands works with the Pacific Nations to improve health and welfare through cancer program planning and outreach services.²⁴⁰ Even with cancer program planning, cancer prevention planning and preventative screenings are lacking in certain areas presumably due to the lack of capital, both monetary and human.

More than 60 years later, radiation is still very much a part of the land, water, and food supply in the Marshall Islands, therefore, cancer prevention and treatment are two imperative areas to provide funding. By providing funding to better cancer prevention programs as well as treatment programs, it would help to mitigate the effects of the nuclear waste that has detrimentally affected the lives of many Marshallese.

Nuclear risk is a focus area of your organization and unfortunately, the Marshall Islands presents a clear example of what can happen if nuclear weapons proliferate and are detonated

²³⁷ *Marshall Islands Cancer Country Profile*. World Health Organization, 2014. 2014. Accessed February 8, 2017. http://www.who.int/cancer/country-profiles/mhl_en.pdf?ua=1.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ "Cancer Council of the Pacific Islands (CCPI)." Pacific Cancer Programs | Cancer Council of the Pacific Islands (CCPI). Accessed February 09, 2017. <http://www.pacificcancer.org/programs/cancer-council-of-the-pacific-islands.html>

around living beings. By contributing to a solution to offset the cancer caused by nuclear testing, it would help to transform the Marshall Islands healthcare system in order to allow the Marshallese to seek cancer care within their home country. As the Marshallese were not active participants in the bombings, allowing them to seek cancer care within their home country would be one way of creating justice for the Marshallese.

Number of People with Cancer in the RMI

	1946 - 2003	2004 - Present
Thyroid Cancer		
<i>Without exposure to fallout</i>	100	30
<i>With exposure to fallout</i>	160	100
<i>Total</i>	260	130
<i>Increase due to fallout</i>	160%	330%
All Cancers		
<i>Without exposure to fallout</i>	2,740	2,860
<i>With exposure to fallout</i>	240	290
<i>Total</i>	2,980	3,150
<i>Increase due to fallout</i>	9%	10%

Diabetes in the Marshall Islands -- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

As of 2016, an average of 20.7% of the Marshallese population has some form of diabetes,²⁴¹ compared to the United States average of 9.1%.²⁴² A large portion of diabetes in the Marshall Islands has formed from the dependence on imported goods due to the high salt and sugar content. Marshallese have had to disproportionately rely on imported goods due to the levels of nuclear radiation in their food sources and soil. On March 1, 1954, the United States detonated a thermonuclear bomb, called “Castle Bravo,” that exposed the Marshallese population to 15 megatons of nuclear fallout,²⁴³ as part of a nuclear weapons testing program. As demonstrated by the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings (which were 1,000 times less powerful than the “Bravo” test), the consequences of these nuclear weapons around living beings is catastrophic. Even years later, the effects of these weapons have a lingering effect on not only the environment but the people as well.

A diet that is based off of mainly imported foods tends to have a higher amount of preservatives and saturated fat, which can in turn lead to a higher risk of diabetes. Before the nuclear testing, fish and fruit were the staples of a Marshallese diet, today, rice, flour and meat are the staples of breakfast, lunch and dinner most of which are imported.²⁴⁴ This dependence on imported goods has led to the increase in obesity and diabetes in the RMI. The Marshall Islands currently has a public health program that provides diabetes treatment and care such as insulin and blood glucose

²⁴¹ *Marshall Islands Diabetes Country Profiles*. World Health Organization, 2016. 2016. Accessed February 8, 2017. http://www.who.int/diabetes/country-profiles/mhl_en.pdf?ua=1

²⁴² *United States Diabetes Country Profiles*. World Health Organization, 2016. 2016. Accessed February 8, 2017. http://www.who.int/diabetes/country-profiles/mhl_en.pdf?ua=1

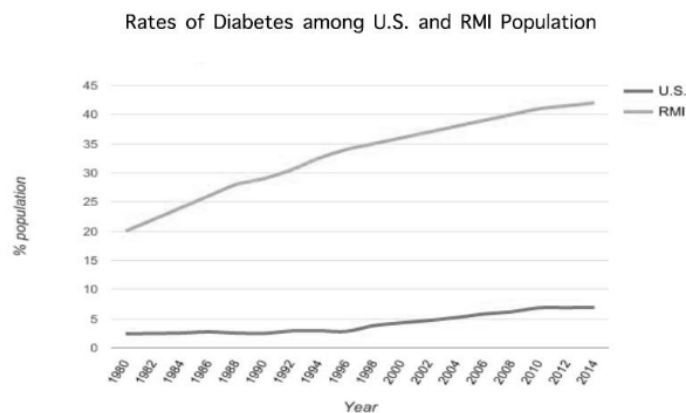
²⁴³ Burr. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb459/>

²⁴⁴ Mellgard, Peter. "In The Marshall Islands, Traditional Agriculture And Healthy Eating Are A Climate Change Strategy." *The World Post*. December 12, 2015. Accessed February 8, 2017. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/marshall-islands-farming-climate_us_566a0b5ee4b0f290e522ac67

testing kits.²⁴⁵ However the key would be to prevent diabetes from occurring within the Marshallese population.

A budget that would allow for educational opportunities for the Marshallese to learn about preventative measures (such as exercise, a diet in low saturated fat and cholesterol) that lowers the risk for diabetes would be a measure that could be taken in order to help spread awareness about the disease and the risks it poses. In addition, creating a food source that isn't dependent on the radiation filled soil, such as hydroponic gardens, would provide an alternative to imported goods and uneatable garden vegetables and fruits. Currently, in Majuro, there is a farmer that is working to grow both indigenous fruits and other fruits that might thrive in climate change.²⁴⁶ His garden “started from seeds that were donated by the government of Taiwan”.²⁴⁷

“Building a Culture of Health”, as The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation puts it, isn’t limited just to America. It is an extremely important ideology, especially in a country that depends on imported food. A first step to take would be to fund the beginnings of hydroponic gardens that allow for food to be grown that does not require preservatives or additives. This would be a critical first step in moving away from import dependency and towards a self-sustainable food industry.



²⁴⁵ *Marshall Islands Diabetes Country Profiles*. http://www.who.int/diabetes/country-profiles/mhl_en.pdf?ua=1

²⁴⁶ Mellgard. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/marshall-islands-farming-climate_us_566a0b5ce4b0f290e522a

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

Health and Sanitation in Ebeye -- Initiative for Global Development:

Coral atolls in the Marshall Islands once alive with culture and community are now uninhabitable because of the high rates of radiation caused by US nuclear testing that has seeped into the food chain and harmed the health of the people. As a result of the radiation contamination in their environment, residents have been forced to flee to nearby Ebeye Island, a densely populated urban settlement. Not only are the Marshallese refugees within their own country, they are forced to live in one of the most densely populated areas in the world. To put it into perspective, there are approximately 15,000 people dwelling in an area one tenth of a square mile.²⁴⁸ These circumstances permit few economic opportunities, poor sanitation conditions, and an influx of communicable diseases.

In the last 15 years there have been an average of 1,182 recorded cases of waterborne diseases per year on the island of Ebeye.²⁴⁹ Limited amounts of fresh drinking water has forced residents to drink unsanitary water which leads to viral infections like cholera. This is further exacerbated by poor hygiene practices and a weak sanitation system. On the island of Ebeye, untreated sewage is stored in a lagoon that often overflows into the streets and fresh water sources during rainfall, presenting a large threat to human health.²⁵⁰ In order to reduce the number of water borne diseases, the Initiative for Global Development must take action immediately to improve sanitation conditions and alter hygiene behavior.

Waterborne disease, while easily preventable in developed countries, is the unfortunate reality countries that lack functional sewage systems. However, the organization Sanergy has invented an innovative model to combat sanitation problems in underdeveloped countries in Africa.

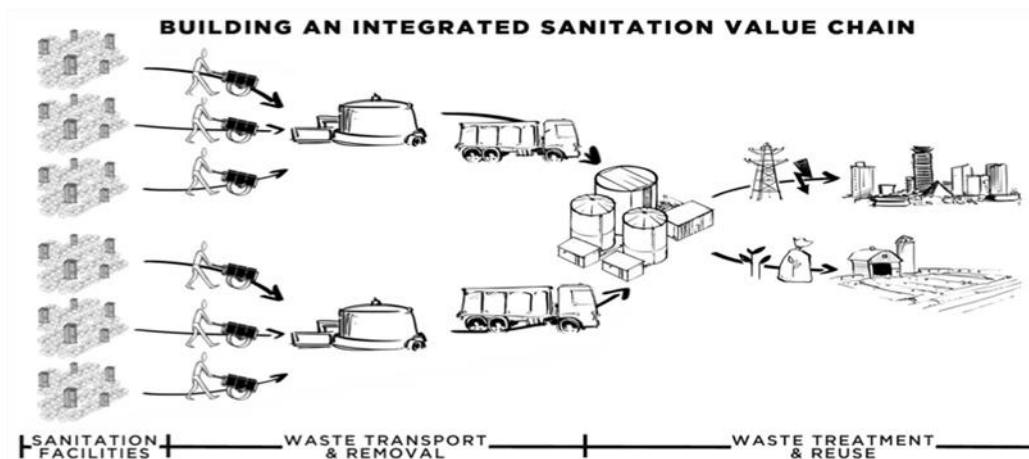
²⁴⁸ Barker, Holly M. *Bravo for the Marshallese : Regaining Control in a Post-nuclear, Post-colonial World*. 2nd ed. Case Studies on Contemporary Social Issues. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2013.

²⁴⁹ "Marshall Islands: Ebeye Water Supply and Sanitation Project Final Report," *Asian Development Bank*. (2015): 6-37, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/project-document/173757/46346-001-tacr-01.pdf>

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 7

Sanergy's Fresh Life Toilet is engineered and built at a low cost, implemented in densely populated urban areas, and operated by local residents. The multi-purpose toilet would serve not only as a hygienic method of waste disposal and recycling, but would also provide economic opportunities to residents of the island.²⁵¹

Sanergy provides a sustainable model of development to combat the issue of waterborne diseases on the island of Ebeye. It is imperative that the Initiative for Global Development take action now to invest in Sanergy so that a similar model can be implemented in the Marshall Islands. Although the Initiative for Global Development operates primarily in Africa, expanding impact to the Marshall Islands would be hugely impactful, saving hundreds of lives taken by water borne disease.



²⁵¹ "The Sanergy Model," *Sanergy*, 2015. <http://saner.gy/our-work/the-sanergy-model>

Aspirational Scholarships for Marshallese Seeking University Education

Building a Bridge for a Sustainable Health Care System

The statements below can be considered vision statements or aspirational documents for what might be possible at the UW or at other universities. In collaboration with department leadership, the graduate school and units like GO-MAP (Graduate Opportunities and Minority Achievement Program) and other allies, we hope that these ideas can be seeds that will blossom and bear fruit in the future.

According to *The U.S. News & World Report*, The University of Washington (UW) is one of the highest ranked schools in the U.S.²⁵² The UW also claims to highly value diversity among its staff, faculty, and student body. However, although there are 73,213 Pacific Islanders in Washington State, (many of whom come from the Republic of the Marshall Islands), there are no Marshallese students attending UW.²⁵³ As a public institution, the University of Washington has a responsibility to promote diversity and reflect the diversity we see in our state. Without the presence of Marshallese students in the classroom, the university is not embracing this responsibility.

From the University of Washington's own data, the UW received a total of 36,840

Applications in 2016. Only 1% of the enrolled freshman were of Hawaiian/Pacific Islander descent and only 14 of the 1,443 transfer students were native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders.²⁵⁴ The number of Hawaiian/Pacific students is the lowest enrollment of all ethnicities. An undergraduate scholarship will attract more Marshallese and Pacific Islanders students to study at UW and allow them to pursue their education without going into significant debt. This scholarship would help Marshallese students succeed in higher education.

Furthermore, it is our hope that after graduation students will return to the Marshall Islands to work in the health care sector, thus improving the effectiveness and sustainability of the current health sector.

²⁵² "US News Best Global Universities | US News Education." *U.S. News & World Report*. Accessed February 20, 2017. <http://www.usnews.com/education/best-global-universities/rankings?page=2>

²⁵³ Revolvly, LLC. "'Pacific Islander American' on Revolvly.com." All Revolvly Quizzes. Accessed February 20, 2017. https://www.revolvly.com/topic/Pacific%20Islander%20American&item_type=topic

²⁵⁴ "About UW," *University of Washington: Office of Admissions*, 2015, <https://admit.washington.edu/why-uw/about#transfer-admission-class-profile>

The Full Circle Scholarship for the Marshallese

Supports students of Marshallese descent seeking a medical degree

Scholarship Overview: From 1946 to 1958, people in the Marshall Islands were subjected to a nuclear weapons testing program by the United States government. Citizens of the Marshall Islands not only had to immediately readjust to the direct health outcomes and land resettlement, but also continue to face long term consequences such as cancer and diabetes. The health care system in the Marshall Islands inadequately provides care to its citizens, partly due to the lack of health care personnel, services, and infrastructure. The Full Circle Scholarship for the Marshallese would provide students of Marshallese heritage funding to earn their undergraduate degree with the hopes that they pursue a career in medicine, thereby ensuring that a sustainable and suitable health care system can be integrated into the Marshall Islands.

Eligibility and Requirements: Students must be of Marshallese heritage living either in the United States or in the Marshall Islands. If the student is from the United States, they must be a first, second, or third generation immigrant. Students must have been accepted to UW, intending to complete their education at the university for the full duration. Students must also express an interest in global health, or intend to pursue a degree in medicine so that they may one day provide health care services in the Marshall Islands.

Students must also demonstrate a strong interest in their cultural heritage with the hopes that they share their rich culture with the UW community. Once a year, students who receive the scholarship are encouraged to participate in planning a day of commemoration for the March 1st “Castle Bravo” detonation. This would provide the UW community an educational experience on an under-discussed topic in US history.

Benefits: The scholarship covers the cost of tuition for the duration of their undergraduate education, including room and board. Depending on the student’s financial needs and geographic placement, funds are also available to help cover the cost of airfare from the Marshall Islands to Seattle. Acknowledging the fact that economic opportunities in the Marshall Islands are sparse due to poverty and lack of development, funding higher education is the catalyst to improving the health and wellbeing of the Marshallese.

Conclusion

The Republic of the Marshall Islands constitutes a tight-knit and resilient community whose history is marked by dozens of nuclear tests that have taken place within and around it. Its rich history, traditions, and culture have found ways to persist despite the radioactive material that has harmed the land, the food chain, and the Marshallese themselves. Although many Marshallese practice their own forms of non-Western medicine, the lack of a self-sustainable health care system has exacerbated long term health problems experienced by the Marshallese. Western sources of aid could thus be beneficial in improving Marshallese access to affordable health care in the RMI. As U.S. nuclear testing has brought the worst of the West to the Marshall Islands, it is important that, with quality health care, the West provides its best as well.

We hope that, through our tools and suggestions, we are able to reach and support the population of the Marshall Islands in creating a stronger, sustainable health care system within the RMI.

Military Aid *and* Community Development



Kwajalein Atoll local government leaders, Republic of the Marshall Islands representatives, Construction Civic Action Detail-Marshall Islands leadership and U.S. Army Garrison-Kwajalein Atoll command staff participate in a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Island Community Center on Ebeye Jan. 9. *(Photo Credit: Jordan Vinson (Kwajalein Hourglass))*

Anais Gentilhomme and Brittany Pederson

Introduction

The U.S. military and the Republic of the Marshall Islands have been tightly connected since the military began testing atomic weapons in the Pacific island nation in the 1960s. Citizens of the RMI and members of the military have both suffered health issues relating to nuclear testing. To this day, U.S. veterans continue to be strong advocates for better health care and equal rights for the Marshallese as they themselves have been harmed by exposure to nuclear testing.²⁵⁵ Though Marshallese people and U.S. veterans have worked together in some parts of the U.S., the U.S. military itself has yet to be capitalized upon for the betterment of the Marshallese on an institutional scale.

One main entity within the military that could act to benefit the Marshallese communities is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The purpose of this group is to provide humanitarian relief and/or to aid in the cleanup of hazardous materials. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers could provide major assistance in the environmental reconstruction of the contaminated Marshallese areas.

Recommendations for Action

To better capitalize upon the military's resources, and improve the working relationship between the military and the Marshallese, this chapter suggests the following recommendations.

1. Environmental Cleanup: Engage the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or the Department of Energy to pursue environmental cleanup through the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) in the RMI, or through actions against climate change by adjusting previous programs
2. U.S. Veteran-Marshallese Relationship Building: Encourage a relationship between the Marshallese communities in Washington and active-duty military and veterans through the implementation of a Pen Pal program and events with local veteran service organizations.

Environmental Cleanup

Environmental sustainability is one of the guiding principles of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers²⁵⁶. One of the duties of this governmental entity is to clean sites that are contaminated

²⁵⁵"Pacific islanders seek health justice." Salem Weekly News. February 18, 2015. Accessed February 19, 2017. <http://salemweeklynews.com/2015/02/pacific-islanders-seek-health-justice/>.

²⁵⁶"Environment." Headquarters U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. 2017. Accessed February 19, 2017. <http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/>.

with hazardous, toxic, or radioactive waste in an effort to sustain the environment²⁵⁷. These types of environmental cleanup efforts could be applied to the Marshall Islands.

The first step in starting this process is to send a letter to the Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management to request they consider the Republic of the Marshall Islands as a site that is eligible for cleanup under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP).²⁵⁸ There are five main criteria that would qualify the Marshall Islands for such a project²⁵⁹:

1. The Department of Energy (DOE) has Authority for Remedial Action and the Potential for Contamination is Significant.
2. The DOE has Authority for Remedial Action and Contamination is possible.
3. An imminent hazard may exist.
4. The site is not covered by other programs.
5. The site is not licensed.

For the first two criteria, the DOE has the command of this program under the Senate report 111-268, or the Republic of the Marshall Islands Supplemental Nuclear Compensation Act created in 2010, and therefore would decide whether to accept or reject a location as a potential cleanup site.²⁶⁰ In the RMI, there is significant contamination and pollution of the water, and the rates of soil contamination are almost double what is deemed safe for human habitation, making the RMI a logical site in which the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers could focus its environmental cleanup efforts.²⁶¹ If another organization were to manage the site, then it would no longer qualify to be a part of the FUSRAP.²⁶² Both of the regulations could be met with the collaboration and negotiations between the U.S. Corps of Engineers and the appropriate representatives assigned to assess the locations.

After a collaborative agreement is made, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would conduct assessments, remedial action, and site closure activities for the particular locations deemed too hazardous in order to establish the RMI as a candidate site.²⁶³

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ "LM Sites." Energy.Gov Office of Legacy Management. Accessed January 25, 2017. <https://energy.gov/lm/sites/lm-sites>.

²⁵⁹ "Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program Summary Protocol." Energy.Gov Office of Legacy Management. January 1986. Accessed February 8, 2017. https://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/SummaryProtocol_198601.pdf.

²⁶⁰ "Senate Report 111-268 - REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS SUPPLEMENTAL NUCLEAR COMPENSATION ACT." Senate Report 111-268 - REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS SUPPLEMENTAL NUCLEAR COMPENSATION ACT. 2010. Accessed February 08, 2017. <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CRPT-111srpt268/html/CRPT-111srpt268.htm>.

²⁶¹ Abadi, Mark. "The US dropped 67 nuclear bombs on this tiny island nation - and now it's far more radioactive than we thought." Business Insider. June 16, 2016. Accessed February 08, 2017. <http://www.businessinsider.com/marshall-islands-nuclear-bombs-radiation-2016-6>.

²⁶² "Senate Report 111-268 - REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS SUPPLEMENTAL NUCLEAR COMPENSATION ACT."

²⁶³ "LM Sites."

Climate Change Sustainability

USAID works to provide resilient and democratic countries with infrastructure needed to mitigate the effects of environment and global climate change. They have developed a five year program called Disaster Preparedness for Effective Response (PREPARE) to help the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia during the 2013 drought by donating and distributing 1.47 million pounds of food and installing solar-powered portable systems which help produce 360 gallons of drinking water a day.²⁶⁴ This program included the institution of the Disaster Mitigation, Relief, and Reconstruction Program (DMRRP) which provided a logistics and operational presence, this section of the program ended in late 2014.²⁶⁵ The continuation of programs such as this as well as implementation of the programs described below will help to mitigate the effects of climate change. One of the missions of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is to address climate change and build resilient infrastructure to adapt to a changing climate. Several programs that the Corps has overseen to address this issue include the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study, a Stormwater Management System and the Norfolk beach expansion to combat sea-level rises.²⁶⁶ At least one of these programs could be applied as a template to the Marshall Islands who have their own specific ecological, historical and political background, in some form as to promote sustainability for the islands that could undoubtedly be destroyed in a couple of decades. Below are examples as to how programs that have been implemented around the U.S. could be modified to fit the needs of the people of the Marshall Islands.

A Model: The North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study

The North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study concluded that the increased risk of coastal flooding on the Northeast United States coast was due to rising sea levels and changing climate. The study further determined that, without proper planning or improvements in the management of rising sea levels, damage equal to or worse than that seen with Hurricane Sandy could be caused were a hurricane to come to the region.²⁶⁷

A similar sort of study could be conducted in the RMI in order to constructively assess, address, and find long-term solutions for the vastly increasing risks of storms and rising sea levels in the country. At this point, precautions that have been taken in the RMI against natural disasters like hurricanes are vastly inadequate, such as temporary seawalls that are often knocked down by large

²⁶⁴ "Marshall Islands Survives Prolonged Drought with Disaster Assistance." U.S. Agency for International Development. January 2015. Accessed February 26, 2017. <https://www.usaid.gov/results-data/success-stories/usg-provides-drought-relief-republic-marshall-islands>.

²⁶⁵ "Humanitarian Assistance." USAID. January 13, 2017. Accessed January 26, 2017. <https://www.usaid.gov/pacific-islands/working-crises-and-conflict>.

²⁶⁶ "Building Climate Resilience." U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Missions, Sustainability, Building Climate Resilience. Accessed January 25, 2017. <http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Sustainability/Building-Climate-Resilience/>.

²⁶⁷ "Building Climate Resilience."

waves.²⁶⁸ Assessing the extent to which climate change impacts the islands, as well as determining a way for improving these hurricane protection mechanisms would be the first step in improving the RMI's preparation against natural disasters exacerbated by climate change.

Below are a list of steps that were taken for the Atlantic Coast Study and how they could be transformed to fit the climate change issues that the Marshallese people endure.

1. Rigorous regional statistical analysis & Climatology and Hazards

A statistical analysis software system was used to simulate different storms and provide insights on the impact that storms could have on the Atlantic coast.²⁶⁹

This simulation system could be similarly used to predict the impact of tropical storms and sea level rise in the RMI. This type of data could give the Marshallese a more comprehensive understanding of how to better handle these storms. Not only would a statistical analysis like this demonstrate that climate change is a definite issue and responsible for many of the challenges in the RMI, it would also substantiate Marshallese demands for the United States government to provide more financial aid to fund natural disaster preventative measures in the island nation.

2. Analysis of Sea level Change

The Analysis of Sea Level Change study sought to explain why storms were hitting the Atlantic Coast as hard as they were.²⁷⁰ In the context of the Marshall Islands, the change in sea level would be the primary focus of the study.

Below is an example of a letter that could be sent to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to advocate the establishment of such a program in the Marshall Islands.

²⁶⁸ Milman, Oliver, and Mae Ryan. "Lives in the balance: climate change and the Marshall Islands." Common ground. September 15, 2016. Accessed February 01, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/sep/15/marshall-islands-climate-change-springdale-arkansas>.

²⁶⁹ Nadal- Caraballo, Nobertoc. C., Jeffrey A. Melby, Victor M. Gonzalez, and Andrew T. Cox. *Coastal Storms Hazard from Virginia to Maine*. Publication no. 401426. November 2015. Accessed February 11, 2017.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

Letter Template:

To Whom This May Concern,

On behalf of [insert name here], we would like to address the [insert department here] with the purpose of commencing a new program that could be pursued with the help of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to benefit the Republic of the Marshall Islands' environment and community.

Recently, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has completed a detailed study which addresses coastal storms and flood risk to vulnerable populations, property, ecosystems, and infrastructure affected by Hurricane Sandy in the United States' North Atlantic region. It helped local communities to better understand increasing flood risks associated with climate change and to provide tools to help those communities better prepare for future floods. The outcome of the study was a nine-step Coastal Storm Risk Management Framework that could be customized for a variety of coastal communities and which could also be customized for the rising sea levels and increased flooding in the Marshall Islands. The only precautions that communities can take at this point in time is creating seawalls that crumble whenever a slightly larger waves crashes into them, putting infrastructures, ecosystems, and any fresh-water reservoirs in jeopardy.

Respectfully, we request the help of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in conducting a similar study and creating a framework to combat these long-term climate change issues in the RMI. Such a comprehensive study would be beneficial for the Marshall Islands as climate change is creating similar day to day challenges for sustainable living.

Respectfully,

[Insert Name and Title]

Gathering Veteran Support

To gather support Marshallese communities in the U.S., should build relationships with other groups that have experience in advocating and organizing movements. One such group is that of the U.S. veterans. One of the oldest military advocacy groups, Veterans of Foreign War, traces its history back to 1899, when veterans returning from the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection formed a grassroots movement for pension and healthcare.²⁷¹ Since then, veteran advocate groups have mobilized for their own needs, but also for the rights of minority groups such as the LGBTQ community and, more recently, the Dakota Access Pipeline with Native Americans and as supporters at Standing Rock.²⁷²

In 2016, members of the National Association of Atomic Veterans (NAAV) chapter in Oregon teamed up with Marshallese to get House Bill 2522 passed. HB2522 provides premium assistance through the health insurance exchange to COFA citizens residing in Oregon, there is now a similar bill in the Washington House and Senate. On February 9th, representatives from NAAV testified in support of this bill, the Oregon chapter president, Gary Smith stated,

As a victim of ionized radiation, I know what the ravages of it are. The Marshall Islanders, through no fault of their own, were subjected to several times what I went through. The American government owes these people a debt we can't repay. My taxes going towards their health care is a well-spent tax dollar.

Smith's words demonstrate how alliances between Marshallese people and U.S. veterans have been explicitly articulated. U.S. veterans active in the Oregon chapter of NAAV and the Marshallese community in Oregon now work with and advocate for each other. The Washington chapter leader of NAAV has similarly expressed an interest in building a relationship with the Marshallese community.

Veterans can be a valuable resource in advocating for Marshallese communities since, as voting constituents in the U.S., they can pressure their representatives to support bills to help the Marshallese. Because the military instills core values such as selfless service, duty, and integrity, veterans often desire to be active in and a beneficial contributor to their communities. Many veterans have been exposed to radiation, Agent Orange, and other hazardous materials during their service while others will likely have a sincere appreciation for the debt owed to the Marshallese for the damage to their land, water and health from nuclear testing. Additionally, the U.S. military values diversity and Marshallese citizens are able to serve in the military as COFA citizens and often do. For these reasons, it is beneficial to encourage relationship building between Marshallese communities and U.S. veteran groups. One tool for such relationship building could be the following Pen Pal program.

²⁷¹ "About Us." 2017. *Veterans of Foreign Wars*. <https://www.vfw.org/about-us>.

²⁷² "Thousands Of Veterans Travel To Standing Rock To Support Activists". 2016. Radio programme. BBC.

Pen Pal Program

Nuclear weapons testing has had disastrous consequences for the environment and the health of Marshallese. Many service members of the U.S. military have also felt the effects of radiation poisoning due to nuclear exposure. Many veterans find it very difficult to access the type of health care that they require to treat their illness, a problem that the Marshallese people are also facing. By introducing and promoting constructive dialogue between these two groups, a movement towards better health care for each might be within reach.

Action can be taken within Washington State to begin grounding support between these two communities. This can be achieved through a conversation between veterans, active duty families, and representatives from the Marshallese community.

Initiating a Pen Pal program between Marshallese Schools, the active-duty military community, veterans, and others can create binding connections between these groups, thus further empowering these already resilient communities. It could be organized by the Minister of Education in the Marshall Islands, the military community outreach organizations and through veteran service organization leaders. Such a demonstration of support and compassion from both groups is sure to draw attention and demonstrate the close relationship that they have.

Potential Veteran Partners

Below we have provided a list of potential veteran partners. These partners could be a useful tool for advocacy in their respective communities.

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Mission/Capabilities</u>	<u>Contact</u>
<p>National Association of Atomic Veterans</p> <p>www.naav.com/</p>	<p>To unite the U.S. Atomic Veteran Community to get a fair hearing related to their developing (radiogenic) health issues that may have been precipitated by their exposure to “ionizing” radiation while participating in a nuclear weapon test detonation, or a “post-test” event.</p> <p>This organization has already joined forces with Marshallese in Oregon to provide health care benefits to COFA citizens.</p>	<p><u>Arkansas</u> W.C. ‘JAKE’ Lamkins jake@lamkins.com</p> <p><u>Hawaii</u> Bob Kiltthau RAKAloha@yahoo.com</p> <p><u>Oregon</u> Fred Shafer derf@trcschafer.com</p> <p><u>Washington</u> Pete Besas Phbesas@aol.com</p>
<p>Joint Base Lewis-McChord Armed Forces Community Center- Outreach</p>	<p>This resource can be useful for coordinating and hosting community building events on JBLM.</p>	<p><u>Program Coordinator</u> (253)967-3544/9287</p>
<p>The Mission Continues</p> <p>www.missioncontinues.org</p>	<p>The Mission Continues empowers veterans who are adjusting to life at home to find purpose through community impact. We deploy veterans on new missions in their communities, so that their actions will inspire future generations to serve.</p> <p>Planning joint community service events in locations with platoons could unite the Marshallese communities with valuable allies. Non-veterans can join platoons.</p>	<p><u>Portland Service Platoon</u> Eric Herndon eherdon@missioncontinues.org</p> <p><u>Seattle Service Platoon</u> Nicholas Sullivan nsullivan@missioncontinues.org</p> <p><u>Honolulu Service Platoon</u> Carlos Santana csantana@missioncontinues.org</p>
<p>Team Rubicon</p> <p>https://teamrubiconusa.org</p>	<p>Team Rubicon unites the skills and experiences of military veterans with first responders to rapidly deploy emergency response teams.</p> <p>This organization could be especially useful in providing disaster relief in the Marshall Islands.</p>	<p>Team Rubicon, Inc. National Headquarters (310) 640-8787</p> <p>There are also regional chapters which can be contacted through the national website.</p>

Conclusion

We hope that this collection of tools will be useful in three main ways: to raise awareness among the general U.S. population about the history of nuclear weapons testing in the RMI, to provide support for advocacy efforts in the realms of health care, education, and migrant workers' rights in ways that benefit Marshallese people, and to work towards building strong, lasting relationships between Marshallese and non-Marshallese people in the U.S.

It was our goal to create tools that would be sustained beyond the time limits of this Task Force. Learning about Marshallese history and culture, as well as talking with Marshallese people has ensured that we will continue to be advocates with the Marshallese against injustice.

We are not going to forget the powerful Marshallese stories we have heard, the moving Marshallese poems we have read, or the beautiful Marshallese weavings we have touched. For all that this Task Force has allowed us to experience us say: *Kommol tata.*



Appendix

Letters to Senators:

As residents of Washington State, we have sent a letter to our senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell advocating for the Marshallese. It could also be a potential tool, as an example as to how to actively advocate for the Marshallese.

Dear Senator Cantwell/ Murray,

We are a class at the University of Washington working on our culminating task force to address the history of U.S. nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands and support the Marshallese. We are members of the Washington State community along with 1,964 Marshallese migrants. We are writing to you as citizens who wish to promote the wellbeing of our Marshallese neighbors here in Washington State, in the whole of the U.S., and abroad in the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

U.S. nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands during the trusteeship has resulted in lasting health issues and displacement in the Marshallese community. In the Republic of the Marshall Islands, some islands have become uninhabitable due to continued radiation, and food and water resources have been contaminated throughout the nation. The resulting displacement has made it difficult if not impossible for the Marshallese to maintain adequate standards of living and to remain connected to their history and culture. Further, exposure to radiation has resulted in a multitude of health issues, especially cancer, which the RMI does not have adequate facilities to accommodate. Efforts by the Marshallese for increased funding under the petition of changed circumstances of the COFA agreement have gone unaddressed by Congress. The US government has thus far failed to uphold their part of the agreement, since the provisions included have shown to be manifestly inadequate.

Continued migration has been taking place as a result, with 19,841 Marshallese currently residing in the United States. Under the Compact of Free Association, Marshallese migrants are able to legally reside and work in the United States. They pay taxes, but don't qualify for welfare programs due to the PRWORA Act of 1996. As many of these migrants come to the U.S. due to lack of medical facilities in the RMI, this stands as yet another roadblock to allowing them access to healthcare. We fully support federal legislation S. 1301, which aims at restoring Medicaid for Compact of Free Association migrants, which has been introduced to Senate but not passed. Another route that may be pursued is an amendment to PRWORA so that COFA citizens are "qualified" migrants and will have access to federal benefit programs.

We believe that there has been a lack of action by the United States government to remediate the damages caused by the nuclear testing program. We ourselves feel the need to stand up and demand the US take responsibility, and we ask that you do the same. The US has an obligation to the Marshallese as their hardships can be traced to US actions during the trusteeship and inaction since. Further, we are living in a time in which it is especially important to make sure that we are serving and protecting our immigrant communities. We support the actions you have taken to speak out against the Executive Order banning people from seven countries from entering the US, and think it is also essential that the immigrant communities already in this country have access to basic social services.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for your consideration on the challenges facing the Marshallese. We hope that you are as inspired by their resilience as we are.

Sincerely,
Task Force on the U.S. Nuclear History with the Marshall Islands
University of Washington, Seattle
Jackson School of International Studies

signatures

News Pitches:

The following news pitches, intended to be sent to potentially interested journalists shown in the chart on page 21, have been modified to fit within the different subgroups presented in this Task Force report. They are modified versions of the main case statement proposed on page 22.

News Pitch: Education

Subject Line: (Must reflect the story subject)

Hi (Journalist),

What if the United States had dropped the equivalent of 1.6 Hiroshima bombs every single day for 12 years onto an area of land no bigger than 2.3 square miles?

"...we mistook radioactive fallout for snow." -- Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, Marshallese Poet

I'll get straight to the point. Given the controversial appointment of Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education by President Trump's new Administration and your previous coverage of (x issue) and (y issue), I thought I'd share with you a quick story of nuclear colonialism in the Marshall Islands.

If Japan and Australia came together to form the hypotenuse of a triangle, the Marshall Islands would serve as the vertex. The islands include more than two million square miles of ocean. From 1946-1958, the United States conducted nuclear tests in these islands detonating 67 nuclear devices. Of these 67 bombs, 34% were detonated at Bikini Atoll -- the setting of Nickelodeon's animated series *Spongebob Squarepants*. Because of an agreement between the U.S. and the Marshall Island called the Compact of Free Association (COFA) the Marshallese have been granted a special legal status that features equal access to educational resources as citizens. The problem is that the existing system is failing Micronesian students. The curriculum ignores their history and authority figures misinterpret Micronesian culture to be defiant. What can be done to foster a sense of inclusion for these students? How can we better recognize and serve Marshallese students?

I'd love the opportunity to chat with you if you're interested in this story.

Thank you kindly,
(Name)
(Email address)
(Phone Number)

News Pitch: Day of Commemoration

Subject Line: (Must reflect the story subject)

Hi (Journalist),

What if the United States had dropped the equivalent of 1.6 Hiroshima bombs every single day for 12 years onto an area of land no bigger than 2.3 square miles?

"...we mistook radioactive fallout for snow." -- Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, Marshallese Poet

I'll get straight to the point. Given the flagrant discourse around nuclear weapons from President Trump's new Administration and your previous coverage of (x issue) and (y issue), I thought I'd share with you a quick story of nuclear colonialism in the Marshall Islands.

If Japan and Australia came together to form the hypotenuse of a triangle, the Marshall Islands would serve as the vertex. The islands include more than two million square miles of ocean. From 1946-1958, the United States conducted nuclear tests in these islands detonating 67 nuclear devices. Of these 67 bombs, 34% were detonated at Bikini Atoll -- the setting of Nickelodeon's animated series *Spongebob Squarepants*.

I'd love the opportunity to chat with you if you're interested in this story.

Thank you kindly,

(Name)

(Email address)

(Phone Number)

News Pitch: Advocacy

Subject Line: (Must reflect the story subject)

Hi (Journalist),

What if the United States had dropped the equivalent of 1.6 Hiroshima bombs every single day for 12 years onto an area of land no bigger than 2.3 square miles?

"...we mistook radioactive fallout for snow." -- Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, Marshallese Poet

I'll get straight to the point. Given the flagrant discourses around nuclear weapons and immigrant communities from President Trump's new Administration and your previous coverage of (x issue) and (y issue), I thought I'd share with you a quick story of nuclear colonialism in the Marshall Islands.

If Japan and Australia came together to form the hypotenuse of a triangle, the Marshall Islands would serve as the vertex. The islands include more than two million square miles of ocean. From 1946-1958, the United States conducted nuclear tests in these islands detonating 67 nuclear devices. Of these 67 bombs, 34% were detonated at Bikini Atoll -- the setting of Nickelodeon's animated series *Spongebob Squarepants*. A special agreement between the U.S. and The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) called the Compact of Free Association (COFA) granted the Marshallese a legal status that allowed for immigration the U.S. as well as healthcare and economic opportunities.

OPTION 1: However, this hasn't been an easy transition. Perhaps ironically, the resilient Marshallese communities in the United States have started building incredible networks of support with none other than atomic veterans.

OPTION 2: However, this hasn't been an easy transition. Perhaps ironically, the resilient Marshallese communities in the United States have built incredible networks of support with none other than atomic veterans. How can these two groups serve one another?

I'd love the opportunity to chat with you if you're interested in this story.

Thank you kindly,

(Name)

(Email address)

(Phone Number)

News Pitch: Health Care Policy

Subject Line: (Must reflect the story subject)

Hi (Journalist),

What if the United States had dropped the equivalent of 1.6 Hiroshima bombs every single day for 12 years onto an area of land no bigger than 2.3 square miles?

“I read first hand accounts of what we call ‘jelly babies’ -- tiny beings with no bones...”

Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, Marshallese Poet

I'll get straight to the point. Considering the flagrant discourse around rolling back access to health care services from President Trump's new Administration and your previous coverage of (x issue) and (y issue), I thought I'd share with you a quick story of nuclear colonialism in the Marshall Islands.

If Japan and Australia came together to form the hypotenuse of a triangle, the Marshall Islands would serve as the vertex. The islands include more than two million square miles of ocean. From 1946-1958, the United States conducted nuclear tests in these islands detonating 67 nuclear devices. Of these 67 bombs, 34% were detonated at Bikini Atoll -- the setting of Nickelodeon's animated series *Spongebob Squarepants*. After over a decade of toxic exposure to radioactive fallout, the Marshallese have suffered gravely; they face absurd rates of cancers, reproductive ailments, and diabetes. As a result, the Compact of Free Association (COFA) granted the Marshallese a special legal status that featured eligibility to Medicaid. Today, many Marshallese have come to the U.S. to have their healthcare needs met. The new Administration's agenda to repeal the Affordable Care Act, again, puts our Marshallese friends in peril. Will the United States turn their back on the friends who sacrificed so much for their political interests?

I'd love the opportunity to chat with you if you're interested in this story.

Thank you kindly,

(Name)

(Email address)

(Phone Number)

News Pitch: Aid

Subject Line: (Must reflect the story subject)

Hi (Journalist),

What if the United States had dropped the equivalent of 1.6 Hiroshima bombs every single day for 12 years onto an area of land no bigger than 2.3 square miles?

OPTION 1: "...we mistook radioactive fallout for snow." -- Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, Marshallese Poet

OPTION 2: "I read first hand accounts of what we call 'jelly babies' -- tiny beings with no bones..."

Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, Marshallese Poet

I'll get straight to the point. Given the flagrant discourses around nuclear weapons and of climate change denial from President Trump's new Administration matched with your previous coverage of (x issue) and (y issue), I thought I'd share with you a quick story of nuclear colonialism in the Marshall Islands.

If Japan and Australia came together to form the hypotenuse of a triangle, the Marshall Islands would serve as the vertex. The islands include more than two million square miles of ocean. From 1946-1958, the United States conducted nuclear tests in these islands detonating 67 nuclear devices. Of these 67 bombs, 34% were detonated at Bikini Atoll -- the setting of Nickelodeon's animated series *Spongebob Squarepants*. After over a decade of toxic exposure to radioactive fallout, the Marshallese have suffered gravely. Furthermore, because of the geographic distribution of the Marshall Islands, the delivery of medical services is especially difficult and extremely costly. The reality is bleak. The Marshallese health care system cannot serve the population effectively. Will aid organizations take action and work with the Marshallese community to develop a sustainable healthcare system?

I'd love the opportunity to chat with you if you're interested in this story.

Thank you kindly,

(Name)

(Email address)

(Phone Number)

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