

More than just Games



Yap Games banner.jpg

“More than Just Games” was the theme of the 9th Micronesian Games held in Yap, Micronesia from July 16-27, 2018. Hundreds of volunteers, including Yap SAI staff members Bryan Dabugsiy (Senior Auditor), Jesse Foruw (Investigator), and Leelkan Southwick (Chief Investigator), dedicated time and effort to help ensure a successful experience for all during the Games – and the Office of the Yap State Public Auditor even won some medals.

About the Micronesian Games

The first Micronesian Games, held in Saipan in July 1969, brought together athletes representing only those Micronesian islands which constituted the U.S. administrated Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, including the Marianas, Palau, the Marshall Islands, Yap, Truk (now Chuuk), Ponape (now Pohnpei), and Kusaie (now Kosrae).

Today, participants of this event come from 10 Micronesian island nations and states, which include the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, the Republic of Palau, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the four states of the Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae and Yap, which compete separately from one another).

The Micronesian Games thus combine events that may be found in other international competitions with events more specific to Micronesian countries. Athletes compete in the fields of athletics, baseball,

basketball, beach volleyball, coconut tree climbing, coconut-husking, fast-pitch softball, golf, slow-pitch softball, spearfishing, swimming, table tennis, triathlon, va'a canoe, volleyball and wrestling, as well as the "micro all around".

More Than Just Auditors

Bryan, Jesse, and Leelkan were involved in various roles, from being part of the organizing committee to representing and coaching particular sports during the Games. Bryan and Leelkan joined 10 other volunteers in Marketing and Communications—one of several subcommittees under the 2018 Micro Games Organizing Committee. Among other goals, the purpose of Marketing and Communications was to develop and execute a marketing plan and obtain sponsorships for the event.

Bryan and Jesse not only donated their time to helping where they could on committees, however. They were also actively involved as head coaches and represented Yap State in participating sports—weightlifting and baseball, respectively.

Bryan's involvement in weightlifting started in 1997 as an athlete, and in 2012, he started coaching the Yap weightlifting team. At the 9th Micro Games, his team secured three silver medals for the State. He is very proud of this team and is now preparing and looking forward to the next Micronesian Games to be held in the Marshall Islands.

Jesse's involvement with baseball comes not only from his passion for the sport, but also from enjoying working with and as a team. He participated as an athlete in the 2010 Micro Games held in Koror, Palau, and since then has continued working with the youth groups to identify and train future players. Their participation in the 2018 Micro Games is another stepping stone in developing Team Yap and getting ready for the Micronesian Baseball Classic event to be held next summer in Koror, Palau.



Jesse Furow (left) and Bryan Dabugsiy

From a SAI perspective, the Games proved how important it is to be giving back to the community and citizenship we serve and are part of. Overall, the 9th Micro Games served as a unique experience for all the people of Yap State, bringing together helping hands from each member of the community, promoting a healthy lifestyle, supporting local culture through sports and consumption of local food, building camaraderie, aiming for sustainability, and keeping true to the theme of this year's games— "More than Just Games".