

1 And what you're doing is helping to empower Micronesians by
2 providing that information. But it's also a responsibility that
3 we don't or shouldn't just wait for others to put on
4 (indiscernible) persons here, we also need to be educating
5 yourselves. But because of people like you, that can happen.
6 So thank you.

7 So time, we have a little bit of time for panel
8 questions. We have until 11:35 and it's 11:26 now. So I'd like
9 to open this time. Looks like I have one person so far.

10 AUDIENCE MEMBER NATHAN KWOCK: I'm Nathan Kwock from
11 Department of the Attorney General (indiscernible) branch. I,
12 too, worked for Margery Bronster. That was my privilege to do.

13 I have one comment and then a question. If an
14 employee has taken away somebody's passport and not paid them
15 the proper wage, that started to sound like human trafficking.
16 And the U.S. Department of Labor, (indiscernible) I think he'd
17 be very interested in knowing about that. He's part of the
18 human trafficking task force that is being set up in Hawai'i.

19 One of the things I deal with on a different
20 matter is violence against women grants. And we fund a lot of
21 service providers, especially in domestic violence and sex
22 assault. And sometimes the providers tell us that one of the
23 issues is that people of some cultures, outreach is needed
24 because they tend not to report the crimes, and therefore they
25 tend not to get services and assistance as victims.

1 For example, we have one project we're funding
2 outreach to Filipino communities in domestic violence. We have
3 another one for Chinese immigrants in domestic violence
4 (indiscernible).

5 So I guess my question, or I'm asking to be
6 educated, is in Micronesia, what is the cultural understanding?
7 Would you tend to report these crimes, not report these crimes?
8 Or how can service providers best to outreach? Thank you.

9 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE PANELIST: (Not speaking into
10 microphone.) I can try to address that. I mean, Micronesia, we
11 don't have human trafficking (indiscernible). You're being
12 taken advantage of, eventually (indiscernible) speak up about
13 it. But initially they don't. And there's a long period of
14 tolerance. There's a high level tolerance for injustices. So
15 there isn't the level that that degree of (voice fading) rarely
16 occurs. But yeah, (indiscernible) is a problem.

17 I'm sorry, what was your other question?

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER NATHAN KWOCK: I think it was
19 culturally Micronesian women tend to seek services for domestic
20 violence or sex assault, or is it your understanding different,
21 they may not think it's a crime?

22 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE PANELIST: Hopefully, it's not a
23 crime. It's a (indiscernible) that happens every day: abuse in
24 the home; (Indiscernible) women and children. It's just --
25 (voice fading).

1 And so culturally, women rely on the families to
2 help them. You know, there is a very strong family unit and
3 bond. And when the woman is being wronged, (Indiscernible).
4 Most people expect that the families will take care
5 (indiscernible) and others. And that will -- eventually, that
6 wrong will be righted. And (indiscernible) involvement from
7 (indiscernible) government (indiscernible), very family-oriented
8 (indiscernible).

9 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE PANELIST: If I could just add. I
10 think so that a lot of that is not reported because a lot of the
11 time the women don't want to bring shame to the family. If
12 anyone finds -- if they tell someone, the whole community knows.
13 The islands are really small, so I think a lot of it is shame.
14 They don't want to bring shame to the families.

15 MS. SEGAL: Just to add a little bit more. You know,
16 the Micronesian seminar is a great source for knowledge on
17 issues and Micronesian society, both now, but also in the past.
18 And it's almost like (indiscernible) writing. He's the director
19 of the Micronesian seminar. He talks a little bit about women's
20 issues and violence.

21 It was interesting to read that -- you know, Lee
22 [Phonetic] says it's because of the change in the family
23 structure, that's also why I think, you know, it's not
24 traditional. Women were respected. In Micronesian culture,
25 they were mostly, matrilineal. And until today, in some of the

1 islands, it's passed through the woman.

2 But what's changed is from having to live in an
3 extended family where you have your male relatives there to
4 protect you as well, we are becoming westernized and we are now
5 living now, in terms of nuclear family, and we don't have the
6 protection of the extended family as much as before.

7 So please just keep that in mind.

8 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE PANELIST: (Indiscernible) that we
9 don't (indiscernible) idea of collectivism. We belong to a
10 larger family. So anything that is too confidential to disclose
11 (indiscernible) reflect the whole family (indiscernible) family.

12 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: I think I saw
13 Dr. (Indiscernible) at the seminar.

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER DR. CRAIG: Sorry, by I'm actually
15 gonna make a suggestion instead.

16 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: And if you could just
17 tell us name and your organization.

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER DR. CRAIG: Craig Severens.
19 [Phonetic.] I'm a supporting member of a very new and
20 struggling group on the Big Island -- Micronesians United Big
21 Island. We got one more (indiscernible) grant. We're about to
22 get the county, uh, pass the building grant from Hawai'i County
23 (indiscernible).

24 You know, the Big Island is not like O'ahu.
25 (Indiscernible) Micronesia which makes it attractive to a lot of

1 Micronesians. We're a very small struggling group, but we do
2 have some members, both Micronesian and non-Micronesian, who are
3 involved in advocacy, and we found a couple of things that work.

4 One very simple thing is to have a business card
5 with Micronesians United on the title of it so that when one of
6 our Micronesian members goes with someone to a service agency,
7 either a private agency or a public agency on an issue of
8 housing discrimination -- on an issue of wrongful termination of
9 employment for injuries; and on some other issues including
10 court issues; on any issue where the agency doesn't have the
11 capacity and the funds, even though by state law they're
12 supposed to provide translation services -- just show the card
13 to the agency person.

14 All of a sudden, the agency person says, wait a
15 minute, there's someone here who knows the rights Micronesians
16 have, and we'd better be careful about simply brushing them off,
17 simply saying, I'm sorry, that service is not available to you,
18 especially if you know that that service is available to you.

19 The other thing, and this is risky in a way
20 because we've got some major confidentiality issues. We have a
21 little paper form and on that paper form there's a date; there
22 is people who are present. And it's a, kind of a record of the
23 interaction between the service agents personnel and the
24 Micronesians. And we keep that on file.

25 So we are going to be developing a kind of a case

1 file of incidents (indiscernible) used to call critical
2 incidents: incidents of misunderstanding, culture
3 miscommunication, and sometimes unintentional acts of
4 discrimination. And sometimes, frankly, more blatant acts of
5 discrimination.

6 The reason I stood up now instead of keeping my
7 big mouth shut is because the two cases you heard from
8 Catherine, we all know of many more cases than those. And I
9 think that, collectively, we're really only seeing the very tip
10 of the iceberg of the amount of cases where people are either
11 not being provided the services that they're eligible for or
12 they're being asked for things that they don't need, like the
13 green card, or because of the language barriers and the lack of
14 translation services and the lack of state funding to provide
15 those services. The services are really not being as effective
16 as they should be. (Leaf blower interrupting.)

17 What I like about this conference -- and then
18 I'll shut up -- is it clearly shows that there are a lot of
19 people in the agencies who care and want to learn. It clearly
20 shows that there are a lot of Micronesians who have already
21 developed the capacity to communicate and provide supporting
22 effort.

23 But there are also a lot of Micronesians out
24 there who weren't being reached yet. And lot of employers, in
25 particular, who either don't understand or taking a chance by

1 actively discriminating, which is certainly the case with the
2 Pohnpeian woman that Catherine described.

3 Thank you and I'll shut up.

4 MS. SEGAL: Thank you so much. Thank you for sharing
5 the ideas and for letting us know that there is a Micronesians
6 United chapter in Hilo.

7 UNIDENTIFIED MALE AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you. I just
8 want to make clarification in regard to the question or comment
9 about the possession of passport by employers. This was a major
10 problem, especially to the Mainland U.S., where employers took
11 away passports of the citizens.

12 (Indiscernible) this is government property. A
13 passport is a government property. So it's not something that
14 employers should possess or take away.

15 So if (indiscernible) your work of employers
16 taking away (indiscernible) some passports or especially if it's
17 a passport, please contact the FSM consulate here in Honolulu --
18 or the same in Washington. Thank you.

19 MS. SEGAL: We have time for one quick question. Oh,
20 I'm sorry.

21 (Two speakers talking at the same time.)

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's usually a problem when
23 we come (indiscernible) the time and then people don't see me.
24 I didn't know the microphone was --.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, no problem.

1 DR. HEINE: Yeah, I just want to make a few comments.
2 The gentleman raised some comments about domestic violence. And
3 I'm very interested in that issue.

4 And I know that as a matrilineal society, we do
5 have our own ways to deal with domestic violence. And
6 culturally, it is something that is handled in the family --
7 families. But I guess, you know, as life is changing and there
8 are lots of families, the support, the network support that
9 comes with an extended family is not as strong in many cases as
10 it used to be.

11 And essentially when you're out in -- you know,
12 you're a migrant, you're by yourself in communities like
13 Hawai`i, the network is not necessarily that strong. And so
14 there are many cases of domestic violence, and that not effect
15 only the women, but many children are affected -- you know,
16 their (indiscernible) and their education, their health is
17 affected by domestic violence in the family.

18 This is something that, at least in the Marshall
19 Islands, we're beginning to (indiscernible) with women's group
20 with surveys to look at how many cases of domestic violence, how
21 spread the issue is in our communities. We're finding that it's
22 a very -- it's an issue that is prevalent. The incidents are
23 really, really high.

24 And so it's something that we can choose not to
25 address and it's already something that we (indiscernible)

1 address as cultures and of people with, uh, cultures that are
2 strong. We find that when we begin to talking about it, then a
3 lot of people come out and want to talk about it and address it.

4 And so I think what I'm offering here is I think
5 we need to educate ourselves, especially the women, about the
6 issues and where they can get help if they want to get help.
7 Maybe some hotline where they can call.

8 But I think the idea of an outreach for women to
9 understand the issue -- and it's almost like, you know, we have
10 traditional medicines and we have modern medicine, and you know
11 about both and you choose to take which one is good for you.

12 And I think this is the case of domestic
13 violence -- you can choose to keep it within your family because
14 of shame and not talk about it. But you can also choose to seek
15 help if you know where you can get help.

16 In our culture, we have what we call a -- we have
17 a very strong saying that talks about a man coming to the aid of
18 the women, their mothers, their sisters. And that used to be
19 very strong. If your husband raise your hands to the woman, to
20 the mother, to the sisters -- your brother or your uncle will
21 fight for you. That, you know, doesn't happen as much anymore.

22 And so because the culture is weak in that sense,
23 I think we need to address that, we need to acknowledge that,
24 and we need to find ways to educate our own women about how
25 (indiscernible) rights or how they can be helped. They want to

1 seek that help.

2 And I think that's my comment. I want to add to
3 the comments that were raised, just to share that that's a
4 passionate issue for me and that's something that I'm very
5 familiar with and, you know, I want to talk about it with other
6 women as well. Thank you.

7 (Audience applause.)

8 MS. SEGAL: I'm so glad we got to hear your
9 perspective on that, Dr. Heine. Thank you. And maybe some day
10 we will have women's shelters or something of the sort that
11 works in our culture in Micronesia.

12 So I think this concludes the panel on Educating
13 About Rights, Responsibilities, and Representations. We thank
14 you so much for your attention. And I will let the mistress of
15 ceremonies bring us to the next point.

16 EMCEE HOWARD: (Indiscernible) I learn about the good
17 things, I learn in America is some of the slang. Scared of you.
18 I think these are powerful voices of Micronesia right here,
19 sitting right here.

20 Okay, before we go to lunch -- by the way, thank
21 you very, very much. Before we go to lunch, I have four
22 announcements. Number one is Mr. Andon Amaraich said to me
23 please tell them that the old man said if they have any
24 questions, you can come and see him and ask your question
25 personally.