

Photo: Nancy Lane



▷ PREL Board member Laborday Atanoa performs at PEC 2001.

## American Samoa

One of the highlights of the Pacific Educational Conference (PEC) is cultural presentations like American Samoa's at last year's PEC. This year, the 19th Annual PEC will be held in American Samoa July 23-25, 2002, with pre-conference institutes and post-conference activities on July 22 and July 26, respectively.

## The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

By the end of the year, students in Saipan will be walking down the halls of three new schools. Five hundred students are already attending Kagman High School, which opened on January 14, 2002, and is the home of the Ayuyu. According to public school system officials, construction of Koblerville High School and Kagman Junior High School is on schedule and should be completed soon. Both schools have anticipated opening dates of August 2002.

## The Republic of Palau

Palau's Senate has recently adopted a resolution praising the achievements of retired educator Masa-Aki N. Emesiochl for his service and contributions to the country's educational systems. With more than 30 years of service, Emesiochl is recognized for his instrumental role in the publication of Palau history and government textbooks, Palauan grammar books, and a Palau-English dictionary. Other achievements include his leadership in the development of a curriculum framework in all subject areas for grades 1 and 2.

## Conferences

One of PREL's primary goals is to provide information about events of interest to Pacific teachers and educational administrators. A 12-month calendar of upcoming workshops and conferences has recently been added to PREL's website and can be accessed at [www.prel.org/conferences](http://www.prel.org/conferences). If you have an activity that you would like to add to PREL's calendar, email [calendarinfo@prel.org](mailto:calendarinfo@prel.org). Please include the following information: name of event, date(s), location, and contact information (contact person, phone and/or fax number, email address, and URL).

## TEEN SUICIDE Are We Losing Our Precious Resources?

By Harvey Lee

While in Saipan, we went to the local dive shop to catch up with old friends. The owner greeted us: "Hi, how are you?" "Fine," I replied. "What's new in Saipan?" The owner said, "By the way, did you know \_\_\_\_\_, the Chuukese dive master?" "Yeah."

"He committed suicide," she said. "His girlfriend left him and the next day they found him dead in his apartment. He hung himself."

A young woman in Saipan also reportedly tried to kill herself after a painful breakup. It was her second attempt. She has been advised to undergo counseling at the Community Guidance Center.

Suicide among our youth and young adults is on the rise in the Pacific. It is a growing concern in Guam, CNMI, and on other Pacific islands. Many people ask why. Is it drugs? A lack of family commitment? Dual income families? Is it due to a change in society's values? Most important, how can we help our young people?

An article at the National Institute of Mental Health website answers frequently asked questions about suicide ([www.nimh.nih.gov/research/suicidefaq.cfm](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/research/suicidefaq.cfm)). Although this article approaches suicide from a Western perspective, there are still many similarities and lessons to be learned. If your school or community wants more assistance on this subject, contact Harvey Lee at the Pacific Comprehensive Regional Assistance Center at PREL by phone at (808) 441-1300 or by email at [leeh@prel.org](mailto:leeh@prel.org), or contact PREL's local service center. ★