



Fono officially confirms first cabinet nominee Pg 2

Cougars' varsity comes out strong
Section B

Fa'amanino Talauega mafua'aga na ia suia ai fa'aiuga
Le Lali

Basketball referees of the ASHSAA High School Basketball League posed for Samoa News during halftime at the Samoana HS Gym in Utulei on Tuesday evening. The games were between the Sharks and the Warriors — both JV & Varsity — with the Sharks taking wins in both divisions in the second week of league play. See story & more photos in today's Sports.

[Photo: Ese Malala]



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American Samoa now has a sex offender registry website

by Fili Sagapolutele
Samoa News Correspondent

American Samoa now has an online sex offender registration website page, where names of sex offenders can be searched, while the Attorney General's Office staff that works on this federally required program need office space to carry out their work moving forward.

The US Justice Department's Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking (SMART) created the National Sex Offender Public Website, (www.nsopw.gov), where the names of a sex offenders can be searched. It also provides a link to website pages of each state and territory.

For American Samoa it's: americansamoa.nsopw.gov — and called the American

Samoa Sex Offender Registry (ASSOR), the purpose of which is to track and register sex offenders who reside, attend school or are employed in American Samoa and to make available information to the public for their use.

It makes it clear that "registering information should never be used to threaten, intimidate or harass another." This information is also in the Samoan language and names of sex offenders can be searched on the American Samoa page.

ASSOR DIVISION

The Attorney General's Office has an ASSOR Division for the sex registry.

Two years ago, the governor signed into law legislation that puts American Samoa in compliance with all provisions of the federal Sex Offender

(Continued on page 6)



Newly confirmed Attorney General, Talauega Eleasalo Ale (center with ula) and his staff after his confirmation hearing yesterday morning before the Senate Government Operations Committee. He is the first cabinet nominee to be confirmed by the Senate and the House. See story inside. [photo: FS]



Fa'asao-Marist Cougars' Susan Godinet (middle) battles for possession of the ball against several Faga'itua Vikings defenders during an ASHSAA Girls Soccer game on Monday, January 30, 2017 at Pago Park Soccer Stadium. (See story in today's Sports.) [FEAS MEDIA/Brian Vitolio]



Fono officially confirms first cabinet nominee — the AG

by Fili Sagapolutele
Samoa News Correspondent

The Fono has officially confirmed Gov. Lolo Matalasi Moliga's nomination of Talauega Eleasalo Ale as Attorney General for the next four years. Talauega is the first cabinet nominee confirmed by the Senate and the House.

Both chambers handed down their respective votes yesterday, with the Senate giving a unanimous approval vote of 16-0 and the House voted 15-2. Talauega went through a confirmation hearing yesterday before the Senate Government Operations Committee and Tuesday afternoon at the House Legal Affairs & Judiciary Committee.

The 49-year old Attorney General was first appointed by the governor three years ago, after then Attorney General Afoa L. Lutu stepped down at the beginning of 2014 to take up one of the three senatorial seats for Ma'oputasi County.

Hearings in both the Senate and House covered a wide range of issues, especially the Immigration Office, as well as immigration law and policies. Samoa News will report in a future edition on other issues raised by the Fono.



Talauega Eleasalo Ale during the Senate confirmation hearing yesterday. He is the first of the cabinet nominees to be confirmed by both the Senate and the House. [photo: AF]

SENATE HEARING

Sen. Taua'a Saunoua Vaouli asked what Talauega would do if a situation arose in which he and the governor have a conflict or disagreement over the inter-

pretation of the law.

Talauega first pointed out that his role as Attorney General is to provide legal advice to the governor and he thanked the governor that there hasn't been

any issue raised in the last three years in which the two have had any conflicts when it comes to the law; and Talauega believes it would never happen.

Responding to a question

from Sen. Fano Shimasaki Fano, Talauega said he supports drug testing for ASG employees and that there are some agencies already conducting drug tests. However, he said such tests are expensive and are done off island, but didn't have on hand the cost per person for a drug test.

HOUSE HEARING

Unlike the Senate confirmation hearing, which lasted 90 minutes, the House's hearing was two hours long, where House Vice Speaker Fetu Fetui Jr. raised his concerns, based on news media reports that it appears prosecutors are not prepared when cases — especially the serious ones — are called in court. He asked what's being done to address this problem.

In response, Talauega said he doesn't accept this criticism against prosecutors not being prepared and reminded the committee that the work of law enforcement starts with a police investigation and the police report is then submitted to the AG's Office where it's reviewed and a decision is then made on whether charges are filed.

If a police report does not reach the AG's office, there is

(Continued on page 7)



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StarKist Co., vice president of corporate communications Michelle Faist (left) and StarKist Samoa general manager Mr. Kwon during last Friday's news conference at StarKist Samoa office. [photo: FS]

StarKist maintains it's still committed to Am Samoa despite the challenges

by Fili Sagapolutele
Samoa News Correspondent

US based StarKist Co. maintains that it is committed to American Samoa despite the many challenges the cannery continues to face, including the lack of land space to expand StarKist Samoa operations, with company officials saying a decision must be made soon by the government on the land lease at the ASG owned shipyard facility.

It's been several years that StarKist has been seeking more land space for a freezer facility — going back to the first term of the Togiola Administration — but still nothing has been firmed up, when it comes to negotiations with the Lolo Administration.

Speaking at a news conference last Friday at the StarKist Samoa office, StarKist Co. vice president of corporate communications, Michelle Faist emphasized that the company "has been a committed member" of the American Samoa community since 1963, when the first plant opened in the territory.

"So for more than 54 years, we have been here, (through) thick and thin in American Samoa," she said adding that StarKist has also seen companies come and go — for example, in 2009 Chicken of the Sea cannery closed down its operations, a day after the Sept. 29, 2009 tsunami, while "StarKist tried to open as soon as possible" following the tsunami.

And StarKist "is really committed to this community, getting the generators up and getting people back to work," said Faist, adding that this is "one

example of how StarKist continues to have a very strong commitment with this community and we're incredibly proud of that."

As part of its continued commitment, StarKist is seeking ASG's help in securing a parcel of land because StarKist Samoa, which has a workforce of about 2,100 as of last Friday, requires more space for fish supplies to help maintain and sustain local operations.

Asked about former Samoa Tuna Processors (STP) cannery workers, StarKist Samoa official Taotasi Archie Soliai said, "We've received a lot of requests from those employees for employment.

"Currently we are not hiring new employees, because we're already maxed out. But nevertheless, we had a discussion internally with General Manager Mr. Kwon, and we're reviewing what our needs are, and the demand coming from people seeking employment," he said. "But essentially the challenges that we faced last year are with fish supply."

However, he noted that the issue of negotiating land space with the ASG shipyard for freezer space has been ongoing. "It's urgently needed in order for us to sustain this operation, space is required in order for us to improve the operation and then expand. We need space to do that," he said.

Asked if StarKist gave ASG a deadline to reach a decision on the long standing space issue, Taotasi didn't provide a direct reply, but said, "We just can't keep kicking the can down the road. A decision needs to be made, because it's affecting the plant, it caused four weeks of

shut down last year because we had no fish supply."

He said, "We've only got 10 days of storage in the current freezer, and based on the capacity that we're producing, it's no where near the standard that we want."

Asked if ASG made a formal request to StarKist to hire former STP workers, about 800 of them, Taotasi responded, "We can't absorb 800 employees."

But at a meeting that was held late last year at the Governor's Office with the governor's people and several business representatives, Taotasi said a request was made by the Lolo Administration to all companies that are able to take on employees, to consider it.

"So they worked out a plan with respect to identifying skilled laborers and they're sharing that with everybody," he said.

"Despite the challenges and the issues StarKist is facing, we are still committed to working together with Gov. Lolo Moliga, Congresswoman Aumua Amata, and even the Fono," Taotasi said.

"We're still very adamant that we can continue a good working relationship with them and we look forward to this space being negotiated fairly soon. We're quite hopeful that it will happen soon," he noted.

Faist added, "We're still hopeful to celebrate in the near future" upon reaching an agreement on the land lease.

And because negotiations are ongoing, StarKist declined to give details of their latest offer to ASG, as well as how large the parcel of land is that the cannery wants to lease.



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Treasurer appointee passes House confirmation

REMINDS LAWMAKERS THAT PAYMENT OF SUBSIDIES IS ONLY A "FORECAST", NOT A PRIORITY

by Fili Sagapolutele
Samoa News Correspondent

In a vote of 14-3, the House yesterday confirmed the governor's appointment of Uelinitone Tonumaiepa as ASG Treasurer, with the final decision resting with the Senate — it is holding a committee confirmation hearing this morning and a vote by the full Senate is expected to follow thereafter.

Tonumaiepa went through the confirmation process late Tuesday morning before the House Ways and Means Committee, with House Vice Speaker Fetu Fetui Jr., commending the Treasurer-nominee for his service to the government in the last four years of the Lolo Administration, in which he was ASG Treasurer.

And if there were past problems, Fetui suggested that these be addressed and reminded Tonumaiepa of the Lolo and Lemanu's campaign motto — "People First".

Rep. Vesi Talalelei Fautanu Jr. said payment of subsidies to semi autonomous agencies, such as LBJ Medical Center and the American Samoa Community College, has been a serious issue in the past because subsidies have not been paid in full.

Tonumaiepa reminded lawmakers that approval of subsidies, which are included in the annual budget, is only "forecast" and government spending depends on collections; and if collections do not meet obligations then ASG pays priorities first, such as payroll.

Asked as to the reason ASG does not meet its collections forecast, Tonumaiepa said there are a lot of reasons. For example, in the last fiscal year, ASG no longer received a tax payment of about \$4 million from Michels (the US based contractor for the American

Samoa Telecommunications Authority's multi million dollar BLAST project, which is completed.)

Regarding collections for the current FY 2017, Tonumaiepa explained that the first quarter is usually very slow, meaning low collections, while collections in the second quarter are usually high.

The Treasury Department said in a report presented to the governor last December that the department "identified the shortfalls and deficiencies in our overall collection" — but "we have also identified and recommended solutions to address these shortages with the continued implementation of corrective measures." (See Samoa News edition Jan. 17, which includes collections for FY 2016 compared to previous fiscal years.)

Rep. Vailoata Eteuati Amituana'i asked about the status of an ASG comptroller and transferring back to Treasury Department the Payroll Division, which has been under the Department of Human Resources for about two years.

For the comptroller, Tonumaiepa said this post is still vacant and it's very difficult to recruit qualified Certified Public Accountants from the US for this post, because of the low salary offered here — about \$85,000 annually — compared to the US salary of about \$200,000 a year.

Regarding the Payroll Division, Tonumaiepa said the governor made this decision and any changes will have to come from the governor.

Another lawmaker asked about re-starting the payroll deduction to make it easy for ASG employees to pay their bills, and Tonumaiepa said the Payroll Division is under DHR, which should be asked about this issue.

Asked by the committee about his vision for the Treasury Department in the next four years, Tonumaiepa first pointed out that in the two-and-half years that he has been Treasurer during the Lolo Administration, ASG was in the "black" instead of in the "red".

And he strives to ensure that the government is never in the "red" during his watch, because it's important for ASG to remain in the "black" at the end of every fiscal year. Additionally, he doesn't want a bad name for the government for being in the red.

Tonumaiepa also said the government has been in the "black" in the last two fiscal years due to strict control of the ASG budget. (Tonumaiepa took over the ASG Treasurer post in mid 2014 after the late Treasurer Falema'o 'Phil' Pili.)

Rep. Sataua Dr. Mataese Samuelu asked what he describes as a "hypothetical" question, on whether it's appropriate for Customs to testify on cases involving drugs, which were first caught by Customs agents, when they go to court. He believes police shouldn't be the only ones to testify.

Although the committee chairman, Rep. Lavea Legae'e Mauga, interjected saying that a confirmation hearing was not the appropriate time for such a question, Tonumaiepa did provide a reply, saying that when Customs confiscates drugs, the case is turned over to police. And if the case does go to court, Tonumaiepa believes Customs should be called to testify as a witness for the government.



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ASCC holds Political Status Forum

By James Kneubuhl,
ASCC Press Officer

The Social Science Department at the American Samoa Community College (ASCC) hosted a Political Status Forum last week, focusing on the pros and cons of our Territory's ongoing political relationship with the United States of America.

Students, faculty, administrators and members of the public filled the ASCC Lecture Hall to hear presentations by three authorities and to participate in the question-and-answer discussion that followed.

The Social Science Department presented the Forum in collaboration with the student Political Science Club and the ASG Office of Political Status, whose director, Tapaau Dr. Daniel Aga, headed the panel of presenters, which included Tualauta District Representative Hon. Samuel Meleisea, and ASCC Executive Counsel Mr. Kenneth Kuaea.

ASCC administrators present for the Forum included Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs Dr. Lina Gaea'i Scanlan, Dean of Academic Affairs Mrs. Letupu Moananu, and Office of Institutional Effectiveness Director Mr. Sonny Leomiti.

The most comprehensive presentation on the history and long-term effects of Amer-



ASCC Political Science Club president George Young (standing, center) congratulates the presenters at the Political Status Forum held at the college last week. They are (l-r) House Rep. Samuel Meleisea, Dr. Dan Aga, Director of the ASG Office of Political Status (seated), and ASCC Executive Counsel Mr. Kenneth Kuaea.

[Photo: J. Kneubuhl]

ican Samoa's affiliation with the US came from Dr. Aga, who explained how American Samoa enjoys a degree of autonomy with regards to its own laws protecting our lands and culture, but is also subject to federal laws, which occasionally bring challenges.

Dr. Aga cited the effect on our economy of the mandated

minimum wage increase, the difficulty for some to access travel because of the federal Cabotage Law, and the recent controversies over fishing rights as examples of these challenges.

He reviewed the options American Samoa could pursue were it to decide to seek a change in its current status as an unorganized and unincorporated territory of the US.

With all of these options, he clarified, come both benefits and risks, which makes it all the more important that American Samoa's citizens gain as much awareness as they can of the political realities before making a decision on which the path forward would truly serve their long-term interests best.

Rep. Meleisea spoke of the effect of federal laws on his own constituents, recalling how residents of his district consulted with him after losing their jobs following the cannery closure that resulted from the minimum wage increase.

Meleisea said the Fono would take action to support the will of the people, if our Territory's residents decided by vote to seek a change in our political status. In the meantime, he encouraged all young adults to familiarize themselves as much as possible with both the history that has led to American Samoa's current political status as well as the options still open to us for the future.

Kuaea posed a number of thought-provoking questions to encourage critical thinking on the subject. "Is it reasonable," he asked, "to believe that the political status our forefathers received aligned with our people's best interests given the discrimination that other peoples of color were experiencing at the time?"

He later rounded off the forum using the evolution of the cellular phone as an analogy. "As limitations were encountered with this man-made creation," he said, "modifications were made to the phone's design to better suit the needs of a changing society. Is it reasonable to assume that our political

(Continued on page 7)



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LUNCH	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Grain Meat Fruit /Veggie Milk Extra Condiments	Tater Tots Chicken Nuggets Grapes Steamed Corn 1% Low Fat Milk Ketchup	Brown and White Rice Teriyaki Beef Orange Steamed Peas and Carrots 1% Low Fat Milk	Fish Burger Papaya Cucumber Sticks 1% Low Fat Milk Tartar Sauce	Brown and White Rice Chicken A La King Ripe Banana Green Banana 1% Low Fat Milk	Beef & Cheese Burrito Grapes Three Bean Salad 1% Low Fat Milk Salsa



Meet A Spelling Champ!

The student at the right will represent Olosega, Manu'a School in the American Samoa Spelling Bee to be held February 22nd. The winner of that Bee will represent American Samoa in the 89th annual Scripps Howard Spelling Bee to be held in Washington, D.C.



BIOGRAPHY OF A 2017 SPELLING BEE FINALIST

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American Samoa

sex offender...

Continued from page 1

Registration and Notification Act (SORNA). And through SORNA, the USDOJ provided funding for American Samoa, not only to comply with provisions of the SORNA, but also to set up a sex offender registry.

Last September, then Criminal Justice Planning Agency director Keith Gebauer told a House committee hearing that SORNA funding goes towards equipment, personnel, and the administration of the SORNA, which is administered in American Samoa by the Attorney General's Office.

Since the early part of last year the Attorney General's Office, which has jurisdiction over the sex offender registry, had been working to implement all provisions of the SORNA as well as getting the local registry up and running.

And when Talauega Eleasalo Ale appeared before the Senate Government Operations Committee yesterday morning for his confirmation hearing for the Attorney General's post, Sen. Paepae Iosefa Faiai inquired as to the status of the American Samoa sex offender registry.

Talauega responded that staff assigned to these programs have already started the registration of names of the sex offenders, but are looking for office space to set up operations and expand its work.

Paepae said this is very

important for American Samoa. However, the Alataua senator claimed that some sex offenders have had their photos and names appear on Facebook, but there are laws to protect them — referring to the sex offenders.

When the American Samoa Sex Offender Registry legislation was hotly debated in the Fono in September of 2014, several lawmakers were concerned with names of sex offenders appearing on the registry in a public domain especially when a person convicted of a sex offence has already served time and paid his/ her debt.

Then Deputy Attorney General Mitzi Jessop told lawmakers at the time "society has a strong obligation to protect our children from sexual predators." Further, she noted that convicted sex offenders give up their right to anonymity.

"Convicted sex offenders have paid their debt to society... however, when a person is convicted of a crime, you give up certain rights," she argued strongly during Senate and House hearings.

"We also do not want to be a safe haven for the convicted sex offenders of the world to come here because we do not have a sex offender registry. The more tools we have to help protect our children, the better," she said.

(The former deputy attorney general is currently the Senate's legal counsel.)



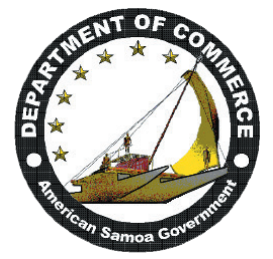
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► ...first cabinet nominee ...

Continued from page 2

nothing his office can do without that report, said Talauega adding that he has heard about this criticism many times, but when he looks into such an issue, in the end there is nothing at all to the criticism.

There is no case in which police prepared and submitted a report, but the AG's office didn't carry out its work, he said, and reminded the committee that his office working together with police is very important.

"If there are no reports from the police, there is nothing the Attorney General's Office can do," he stressed. And after a police report is submitted, he said there is still a lot more work to be done by both sides before any charges are filed in court.

He prays that with the change at the leadership of Public Safety, referring to the new acting Police Commissioner, the relationship between his office and police will be more positive — with both sides continuing to work closely together.

Samoa News should point out that it has reported many times about cases being called but having to be continued after the court was told that prosecutors had not received the police report; and just recently the court released a man due to the lack of a police report to support the charges. However, Samoa News has also reported of the courts' concerns when cases are not moving forward because the AG's Office is not prepared, i.e. it says it is still reviewing the case.

Responding to another question from Fetui, Talauega said that the AG's office currently has four Samoan attorneys and seven hired from the US. He said that his office has a year-round advertisement to recruit attorneys — not only locally but also from the US.

Currently it has been difficult to hire attorneys locally and that's why the AG's office depends on attorneys hired from the U.S, he said.

The number of attorneys in the AG's office was also raised in the Senate. Another issue raised in both chambers, is Talauega's opinion on electing the Attorney General and this issue has been raised over the years in the Fono, discussed during gubernatorial debates and in the 2010 Constitutional Convention.

Talauega noted that there are many elected posts for American Samoa — the governor and lieutenant governor; members of the local House of Representatives; and the Delegate to the US House. Additionally, the Attorney General is part of the Executive Branch (along with the Legislature and the Judicial branches of government) and electing an Attorney General means that would create a fourth branch of government. He said the Attorney General should not become a political matter.

The acting AG said the US territories of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas elect their attorneys general, and he has seen the good and the bad side of an elected AG. He said the AG is the top legal advisor to the governor and works together with the governor to benefit the people of American Samoa.

He believes the current set up for American Samoa is good. However, if there is a change — maybe one of them is to have a voice in the Fono. For example, in Hawai'i, the governor appoints the Attorney General and the appointment is confirmed by the state Legislature, which also confirms the removal of the Attorney General if sought by the governor.

► Political Status...

Continued from page 5

status, a man-made creation still in its original design from the early 1900s, is sufficient 'as is' to meet the needs of American Samoans in the 21st Century?"

Several ASCC students, who attended the forum, agreed that the forum provided valuable clarification on a subject many find difficult.

"Talking with my peers, most were unaware of our Territory's political status and why our local leaders are not making a move to change things we feel are unjust against us," said Political Science major Mary Nautu. "This forum explained our Territory's status quo in regards to the USA, and I believe that everyone in our Territory deserves to know where we stand because, our Territory holds the highest enlistment in the United States military."

As to a change in political status, Ms. Nautu expressed reservations. "I am against

losing my culture in order to reap the fruits of fully applying the US Constitution here. Our forefathers were wise enough to make decisions for our Territory a century ago. I am positive that the status quo they decided for us is still the best."

Ms. Neolani Semaia, also a Political Science major, also favors a cautious approach to the status quo. "Many see the words 'unorganized and unincorporated' then assume that we should be organized," she said, "but I personally feel that we should stay the way we are. Although we have some flaws, American Samoan is better off the way it is."

Mrs. Elena Tavai, a non-traditional ASCC student who is also the Student Representative to the Board of Higher Education, summed it up for many. "I enjoy the liberties we have been blessed with especially when comes to land rights," she said. "I believe we are fortuitous in that we enjoy a piece of the American Dream yet at the same time honor our forefathers and live the fa'aSamoa way of life."

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Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, joined by President Donald Trump, Vice President Mike Pence and his wife Renda St. Clair, laughs after signing the Appointment Affidavit after being sworn in as Secretary of State in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2017. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

Religious right looking to Trump for protections

WASHINGTON (AP) — Religious conservatives whose overwhelming support propelled Donald Trump to the White House are watching closely for him to deliver on promised protections for religious objectors to gay marriage and abortion.

On Thursday, Trump speaks at the National Prayer Breakfast, a high-profile event bringing together faith leaders, politicians and dignitaries. He has not indicated how he'll act on the provisions sought by religious conservatives, which critics say could sanction discrimination against gays.

The annual breakfast offers an opportunity for a pause in the rhetoric of the day. It also provides a political spotlight, as it did in 2013 for Ben Carson, who drew national attention as a Republican presidential candidate for railing against the modern welfare state.

Earlier this week, the Trump administration announced that the president would leave intact a 2014 executive order that protects workers for federal contractors from anti-LGBTQ discrimination, saying in a statement that Trump "continues to be respectful and supportive of LGBTQ rights, just as he was throughout the election."

Still, religious conservatives have high expectations that Trump will follow through on his promises through executive orders or other actions, said Kelly Shackelford, head of First Liberty Institute, a non-profit legal group that specializes in religious freedom cases.

Shackelford said he couldn't think of any candidates "who have been more outspoken on their commitment to religious freedom" than Trump. He particularly noted Trump's pledge to repeal the Johnson Amendment, an IRS rule barring pastors from endorsing candidates from the pulpit.

Supporters of LGBTQ rights held similar expectations about Trump, and convened a call with reporters on Wednesday to express their anxiety.

"We think it is entirely possible there could be an executive order that creates religious exemptions," said James Esseks, LGBT project director for the American Civil Liberties Union. He added that the "narrative" that Trump won't harm the LGBTQ community was "not correct."

During a Monday news briefing, White House spokesman Sean Spicer offered no details on whether Trump

(Continued on page 9)



American Samoa Government
OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT

INVITATION FOR BIDS IFB 2377-17

Issuance Date: January 17, 2017

Closing Date: February 6, 2017
No later than 10:00 a.m. (local time)

INVITATION

Sealed bids are being solicited to provide Backhoe Loaders for the Department of Public Works.

RECEIPT & OPENING OF BIDS

Sealed bids will be received by the Acting Chief Procurement Officer, American Samoa Government, Tafuna, American Samoa 96799, until 10:00a.m. (local time), Monday, February 6, 2017 at which time and place the sealed bids will be publicly opened and read.

BID DOCUMENTS

Bid documents, including Specifications, may be examined at the Office of Procurement or obtained there from free of charge during normal hours of operation.

CONDITIONS

The American Samoa Government reserves the right to:

- not accept the lowest or any bid.
- reject all bids and reissue and amended IFB.
- request additional information from any bidder submitting a bid.
- waive any informalities in bidding as may be in the best interest of the American Samoa Government.

DR. ORETA MAPU CRICHTON
Acting Chief Procurement Officer

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS



American Samoa Shipyard Services Authority (ASSSA)

Employment Opportunity! Operation Manager (OM)

The American Samoa Shipyard Services Authority (ASSSA) is a semi-autonomous and a public Authority, which provides direct services in support of our local fishing and maritime industries, via repairs and maintenance of vessels. In that regards, ASSSA represents a critical link to the local economy, which embodies two-thirds of the Territory's private sector economic activities. Thus, ASSSA is seeking to hire a full time **Operations Manager (OM)** for the Shipyard, who will exercise management and control over technical, engineering, business and Yard services consistent with policies, rules and regulations in accordance with and under the purview of American Samoa laws and Shipyard directives.

Essential Duties:

Operations manager plans, directs and coordinates the operations of the Shipyard, and is responsible for ensuring and improving the performance, productivity, efficiency and profitability of departmental, divisional and organizational operations through the provision of effective methods and strategies. Operations Manager reports directly to the CEO

Tasks and Responsibilities:

- Coordination and Supervision—Coordinate, manage and monitor the workings of various departments and divisions of the Shipyard;
- Financial—Utilize financial data to improve profitability. Prepare and control operational budgets. Control inventory. Plan effective strategies for the financial well-being of the company;
- Best Practices—Improve processes and policies in support of organizational goals. Formulate and implement departmental and organizational policies and procedures to maximize output. Monitor adherence to rules, regulations and procedures;
- Human Resources—Plan the wise use of human resources. Organize recruitment and placement of required staff. Establish organizational structures. Delegate tasks and accountabilities. Establish work schedules. Supervise staff. Monitor and evaluate performance;
- Production and Planning—Coordinate and monitor the work of various departments involved in production, warehousing, pricing and distribution of goods. Monitor performance and implement improvements. Ensure quality of products. Manage quality and quantity of employee productivity. Manage maintenance of equipment and machinery. Provide technical support, where necessary;
- Communications—Monitor, manage and improve the efficiency of support services such as M&O IT, HR, Accounts and Finance. Facilitate coordination and communication between support functions.
- Sales, marketing and Customer Service—Manage customer support. Plan and support sales and marketing activities.
- Strategic Input—Liaison with top management. Assist in the development of strategic plans for operational activity. Implement and manage operational plans.

Education and Experience:

- A Bachelor's degree in business, management, industrial technology, marine engineering or project management; with 8 years in ship repair industry; plus 6 years in management and 4 years of craft (trade) foreman, with a competent certification. (Or in lieu of a degree, 12 years of experience in ship repair industry plus 6 years in management and 4 years of craft (trade) foreman, with a competent certification);
- Knowledge, experience and skills in relevant industries (shipyard, fisheries or marine) planning, production and management experiences;
- Knowledge, experience and skills in organizational effectiveness and operational management principles and practices;
- Knowledge, experience and skills in regulatory and compliance issues of the industries;
- Knowledge, experience and skills in estimations, planning and appraisal principles and practices of shipyard and marine relevant industries;
- Knowledge, experience and skills on human, procurement and financial resources principles and practices;
- Knowledge, experience and skills in project management, troubleshooting and assignment mapping principles and practices;
- Knowledge, experience and skills in Information technology

Preferences:

- Who is a US Citizen, US National or permanent residence of American Samoa;
- Who has served and honorably discharged from military services, in relationship to onboard vessels or shipyards;
- Who has demonstrated knowledge of vessels, marine engineering, and/or shipyard, with competent certification in craft or trade;
- Who has applicable knowledge in regulatory and compliance issues, referencing Shipyard's operation (i.e., safety, security, EPA, OSHA, DOL, etc.);
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Terms and Conditions:

If selected as a finalist, a reasonably attractive offer will be made when all necessary documents and credentials are collected and verified.

To Apply:

Please submit **application** (ASG application form may be picked up at the Shipyard office or request to send by email) and **CV**, in writing, addressed to the CEO, ASSSA, PO Box 734, Pago Pago, AS 96799 and must be physically received by, **February 08, 2017**.

Compiled by Samoa News staff

DEAN'S LIST ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM OFF-ISLAND COLLEGES

The following students have been named to their respective school's Dean's List for the 1st quarter of the 2016- 17 Spring academic year.

At Wentworth Military Academy and College, those who have achieved a grade point average of 3.0 or higher and have no grade below a C have been named to the Dean's List and these are the students from American Samoa: Louisa Crawley, Nathaniel Tuamoheloa and Vitolio Vitolio

(News from Wentworth Military Academy College)

At University of Central Missouri, Lauiva'a C Tavai, Pago Pago, American Samoa, earned a place on the Fall 2016 semester Dean's List at University of Central Missouri. Tavai's academic work earned him a place on the 3.5 to 3.9 list.

Founded in 1871, University of Central Missouri is a comprehensive regional university, which offers more than 150 undergraduate and graduate programs for more than 12,000 students.

(Media release from UCM)

AMATA'S AIR SERVICE BILL PASSES HOUSE

Washington, D.C. – Tuesday, Congresswoman Aumua Amata, and the House of Representatives addressed H.R. 276 this afternoon. The bill amends title 49, United States Code, to ensure reliable air service in American Samoa.

"I could not be happier to report that the House passed our important legislation this afternoon, that will make the permitting process easier for those foreign air carriers who provide service in American

Samoa between the islands of Tutuila and Manu'a," stated Amata. "Traditionally, these carriers have had to reapply for the permits every 30 days, which in turn has discouraged other carriers from providing service on the route. I am hopeful that by easing these burdensome regulations more carriers will begin to service the route, thereby increasing competition and reducing the cost of travel for our people between the islands," continued Amata.

Specifically, H.R. 276 changes the requirement of foreign carriers who service the route between Tutuila and Manu'a to apply for a waiver from every 30 days, to every six months. Congresswoman Amata's measure passed the House by unanimous consent and will now be sent to the Senate for consideration where it is expected to easily pass and will then be sent to the President for his signature.

"This is just the first step in improving the air service in American Samoa, and I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in Washington, as well as our local leadership here at home to make those much needed improvements a reality," said Amata. "I want to thank Chairman Shuster, Subcommittee Chairman LoBiondo, and their staff for their efforts in getting this bill that is so important to the people of American Samoa quickly through the committee. I also want to thank Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy and his staff for their assistance and quick attention to the bill and I look forward to seeing it signed into law by the President," concluded the Congresswoman.

(Media release from Office of Congresswoman Aumua Amata, Washington D.C.)

► Religious right looking ...

Continued from page 8

could still issue an executive order affecting the LGBTQ community.

"There is a lot of executive orders, a lot of things that the president has talked about and will continue to fulfill, but we have nothing on that front now," Spicer said.

The White House press office did not respond Wednesday to a request for further comment.

For now, both sides are speculating on Trump's plans.

Gay rights supporters argue that he could sign an executive order that would allow religious organizations that receive federal money — like charities or hospitals — to make hiring and other decisions based on religion. They also said he could offer a more wide-ranging order.

Religious conservatives, who saw a series of defeats on

same-sex marriage, abortion and other issues under former President Barack Obama, have been bolstered by Trump's win. In a letter last year to Roman Catholics, Trump pledged, "I will defend your religious liberties and the right to fully and freely practice your religion, as individuals, business owners and academic institutions."

Trump's Supreme Court pick this week was also considered a positive sign.

A favorite of conservatives, Neil Gorsuch serves on the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, where he sided with Hobby Lobby and the Little Sisters of the Poor when they mounted religious objections to the Obama administration's requirement that employers provide health insurance that includes contraceptives.





President Donald Trump pauses during a meeting in the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2017. Trump discussed the nomination of Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court, setting up a fierce fight with Democrats over a jurist who could shape America's legal landscape for decades to come.

(AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

Trump to Mexico: Take care of 'bad hombres' or US might

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump warned in a phone call with his Mexican counterpart that he was ready to send U.S. troops to stop “bad hombres down there” unless the Mexican military does more to control them, according to an excerpt of a transcript of the conversation obtained by The Associated Press.

The excerpt of the call did not detail who exactly Trump considered “bad hombres,” nor did it make clear the tone and context of the remark, made in a Friday morning phone call between the leaders. It also did not contain Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto’s response. Mexico denies that Trump’s remarks were threatening.

Still, the excerpt offers a rare and striking look at how the new president is conducting diplomacy behind closed doors. Trump’s remarks suggest he is using the same tough and blunt talk with world leaders that he used to rally crowds on the campaign trail.

Eduardo Sanchez, spokesman for Mexico’s presidential office, denied the tone of the conversation was hostile or humiliating, saying it was respectful.

“It is absolutely false that the president of the United States threatened to send troops to Mexico,” Sanchez said in an interview with Radio Formula on Wednesday night.

A White House spokesman did not respond to requests for comment. The Mexican Foreign Relations Department had earlier told The AP: “The negative statements you refer to did not occur during said telephone call. On the contrary, the tone was constructive.”

The phone call between the leaders was intended to patch things up between the new president and his ally. The two have had a series of public spats over Trump’s determination to have Mexico pay for the planned border wall, something Mexico steadfastly refuses to agree to.

“You have a bunch of bad hombres down there,” Trump told Pena Nieto, according to the excerpt given to AP. “You aren’t doing enough to stop them. I think your military is scared. Our military isn’t, so I just might send them down to take care of it.”

A person with access to the official transcript of the phone call provided only that portion of the conversation to The Associated Press. The person gave it on condition of ano-

nymity because the administration did not make the details of the call public.

The Mexican website Aristegui Noticias on Tuesday published a similar account of the phone call, based on the reporting of journalist Dolia Estevez. The report described Trump as humiliating Pena Nieto in a confrontational conversation.

Mexico’s foreign relations department said the report was “based on absolute falsehoods.”

Americans may recognize Trump’s signature bombast in the comments, but the remarks may carry more weight in Mexico.

Political analyst and former presidential spokesman Ruben Aguilar notes Pena Nieto had enjoyed an apparent spike in his low approval levels, as Mexicans rallied around him for publicly challenging Trump in the border wall dispute.

The latest remarks could undercut that, if Pena Nieto is viewed as “weak,” he said.

Trump has used the phrase “bad hombres” before. In an October presidential debate, he vowed to get rid the U.S. of “drug lords” and “bad people.”

“We have some bad hombres here, and we’re going to get them out,” he said. The phrase ricocheted on social media with Trump opponents saying he was denigrating immigrants.

Trump’s comment was in line with the new administration’s bullish stance on foreign policy matters in general, and the president’s willingness to break long-standing norms around the globe.

Before his inauguration, Trump spoke to the president of Taiwan, breaking long-standing U.S. policy and irritating China. His temporary ban on refugees and travelers from seven Muslim-majority countries, aimed at reviewing screening procedures to lessen the threat of extremist attacks, has caused consternation around the world.

But nothing has created the level of bickering as the border wall, a centerpiece of his campaign. Mexico has consistently said it would not pay for the wall and opposes it. Before the phone call, Pena Nieto canceled a planned visit to the United States.

The fresh fight with Mexico last week arose over trade as the White House talked of a 20 percent tax on imports from the key U.S. ally to finance the wall after Pena Nieto abruptly scrapped his Jan. 31 trip to Washington.



American Samoa Shipyard Services Authority (ASSSA)

Employment Opportunity! MARINE MECHANIC

The American Samoa Shipyard Services Authority (ASSSA) is a semi-autonomous and public Authority, which provides direct services in support of our local fishing and maritime industries via repairs and maintenance of vessels. In that regards, ASSSA represents a critical link to the local economy, which embodies two-thirds of the Territory’s private sector economic activities. Thus, ASSSA is seeking to hire a full time Marine Mechanic for the shipyard, who will exercise management and control over Shipyard Marine equipment and machines.

Working Hours: Monday-Friday 7:30am – 4:00pm

Full time position and salary commensurate with education & experience credentials

Essential Duties:

- Perform major and specialized mechanical overhaul and repair work on gasoline and diesel marine engines, overboard motors, and related marine equipment and systems using schematic charts and technical manuals.
- Establishes and maintains a preventive maintenance program for marine engines and related marine equipment and machinery.
- Tests and trouble shoot marine engines and equipment to determine need for repairs or adjustments.
- Repairs and maintains hydraulic equipment and valves.
- Operates hand and power tools associated with marine engine and equipment repair.
- Assists in fabrication of equipment and / or special tools to perform work.
- Make orders to purchase parts and supplies.
- Writes specifications for and recommends purchase of marine equipment.
- Write reports, as needed
- Perform other duties as required.

Job Requirements

- At least 2 years’ Associate degree programs or marine certification certificate in lieu, with minimum of 5 years of experience in the field
- Knowledge and Skills, Specialized knowledge to analyze, troubleshoots and solve complex problems with engines, machines and equipment.
- Mental and Visual Effort Continuous -- concentrated mental and visual effort plan and perform complex work. Physical Effort, Heavy physical exertion.
- Responsibility for Cost Control-- Sustained high degree of attention required to prevent damage or waste.
- Responsibility for Others -- Sustained high degree of care and awareness required to prevent physical injuries.
- Supervisory Responsibility -- Assigns tasks to a helper, and/or supervises student or temporary employees during a minor portion of time.
- Working Conditions -- frequent exposure to circumstances which can cause total disability or death.
- Responsibility for External and Internal Relations -- Regular, routine contacts with other departments and occasional external contacts primarily to supply or seek information.
- Well organized.
- Able to write detailed reports when required.
- Adhere to all rules, regulations and protocols of the Shipyard
- Adhere to Safety Regulations and Policies.

Interested Applicants can contact Adrian Alama Povalu , Acting Human Resource Technician @ 684-644-4123 for details.

Email: shipyardserviceauthority@gmail.com • Website: <http://www.americansamoashipyard.com>

AS Shipyard Services Authority is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Dems in President Trump states face pressure on Supreme Court pick

WASHINGTON (AP) — As President Donald Trump presses for Senate confirmation of his Supreme Court nominee, Judge Neil Gorsuch, much of the initial, intense pressure will be on moderate Democrats, especially those up for re-election next year in states that Trump won handily.

Some of those senators are keeping their options open, saying they will wait to meet with the nominee and make a decision in time. Some have signaled or pledged opposition. Several said in statements that Gorsuch too often sided with corporations and against the working-class — voters they are trying to court in their re-election bids.

Led by Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., Democrats are insisting that Gorsuch get 60 votes of support in the 100-member Senate, saying that would make it clear that Gorsuch is mainstream enough to be confirmed.

It's unclear if Republicans, with a 52-48 majority, will be able to woo the eight Democrats they need. Liberals are pressuring Democrats to resist Trump and all his nominees. But that could prove politically costly for the 10 Democrats up for re-election in Trump states.

"The minority needs to decide whether or not they want to go to states like North Dakota and Montana and Missouri and Indiana and West Virginia where Mr. Trump won by 17 points or more and talk to the real people there, and say 'we're going to stop what was clearly your will,'" said North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis, a Republican member of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Conservative groups will add to the pressure. The Judicial Crisis Network is pledging to spend \$10 million to make sure that Gorsuch is confirmed and has already made an ad buy in a few crucial states.

A look at Democrats up for re-election in 2018 in Republican-leaning states, and what they have said about Gorsuch.

Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis.

Baldwin, who rarely bucks her party, says Gorsuch is "someone who will have a hard time earning bipartisan support."

She said she looks forward to meeting with him "because I have a number of concerns and questions about his deeply troubling record, particularly his rulings against disabled students, against workers, and against women's reproductive health care."

Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio

Brown, who faces a possible rematch with Republican Josh Mandel, was one of a handful of Democrats who has already announced his opposition. He said Gorsuch's record "is far outside of the judicial mainstream."

"The people of Ohio deserve Supreme Court Justices who will defend the rights of working families over Wall Street and corporate special interests - and Judge Gorsuch's record doesn't pass that test," Brown said.

Sen. Robert Casey, D-Pa.

Casey said he would review Gorsuch's record. He said in a statement that he is concerned that far-right groups had too much influence in the nomination, and that the current Supreme Court "has moved far outside the mainstream and has too often favored big corporations at the expense of our workers and middle-class families."

Sen. Joe Donnelly, D-Ind.

Donnelly, a conservative Democrat, released a sparse statement: "As I have said part of our job as senators includes considering, debating, and voting on judicial nominations, including to the Supreme Court. I will carefully review and consider the record and qualifications of Neil Gorsuch."

Sen. Heidi Heitkamp, D-N.D.

Heitkamp, who represents heavily Republican North Dakota, issued a statement that said she takes the role of vetting Supreme Court justices seriously, but didn't mention Gorsuch.

Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.V.

Manchin, who often crosses the aisle to vote with Republicans, met with Gorsuch Wednesday. He has backed Schumer's call for a nominee who can get 60 votes but also said a justice needs to be confirmed.

"To have the judicial branch work, you have nine members of the highest level," he told reporters as he began his meeting with the nominee. "Eight doesn't work."

Speaking of the pressure on Democrats seeking re-election in states that Trump carried in November, Manchin said on MSNBC's "Morning Joe" Wednesday: "I didn't come here to say, 'Oh, my goodness, if I don't do this, I might not get re-elected.'"

Sen. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo.

McCaskill tweeted before Trump made his nomination Tuesday that "We should have a full confirmation hearing process and a vote on ANY nominee for the Supreme Court."



Supreme Court Justice nominee, Neil Gorsuch, center, is joined by Vice President Mike Pence, right, as they meet with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Ky. on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2017. Last year, Senate Republicans, led by McConnell, blocked a confirmation hearing for Judge Merrick Garland, President Barack Obama's pick for the vacancy left by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia who died in February 2016. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)



AMERICAN SAMOA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

INVITATION FOR BIDS

IFB No. ASCC# 002-2017

Due Date and Time: February 24, 2017

Date of Issuance: January 30, 2017

No Later than 2:00p.m. Local Time

The American Samoa Community College (ASCC) and funded under Title III College Accelerated Preparatory Program (CAPP) issues an Invitation for Bids (IFB) from qualified and licensed firms to provide the following:

"COMPUTER DESKTOPS, LAPTOPS, PRINTERS, COPIERS, PROJECTORS, & OTHER MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS FOR ASCC"

SUBMISSION:

Original and five copies of the Invitation for Bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked: **ASCC IFB#002-2017 Computer Desktops, Laptops & Other Instructional & Miscellaneous for ASCC.** Bids are to be sent to the following address and will be received no later than 2:00p.m. Local Time, **Friday, February 24, 2017.**

ASCC Procurement Office
Mapusaga Campus,
Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799
Attn: Jessie Su'esu'e, Procurement Officer

Any bids received after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstances. Late submissions will not be opened and will be determined as being non-responsive.

DOCUMENTS:

The IFB complete package detailing requirements is available at the ASCC Procurement Office, Mapusaga Campus during normal working hours and may also be obtained by emailing j.suesue@amsamoa.edu

RIGHT OF REJECTION:

The American Samoa Community College (ASCC) reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids and to waive any irregularities and/or informalities in the submitted bid proposals that are not in the best interest of the college or the public.

Approved for Issuance by:
Dr. Rosevonne Makaiwi Pato
President, American Samoa Community College (ASCC)



Smoke rises from a huge fire at the House Technology Industries (HTI) factory inside the Export Processing Zone Authority for more than twenty hours, Thursday, Feb. 2, 2017 in General Trias township, Cavite province south of Manila, Philippines. A Philippine governor says more than 100 workers, including three Japanese, have been injured in a fire that hit a huge factory south of Manila that sent thousands of employees scampering to safety. (AP Photo/Bullit Marquez)

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Bluesky is a well established telecommunications company in Samoa, American Samoa, Cook Islands & New Zealand. Join a company that develops your career while championing team work, integrity and positive attitude. Bluesky is now seeking qualified candidates for the vacancy below:

FINANCIAL CONTROLLER

POSITION SUMMARY

Reporting to the Country Manager, the Financial Controller is responsible for planning, directing and controlling the Company's financials, and provide sound financial advice to Executive(s) and management staff. This includes preparing the budget; conducting financial analysis and preparing financial reports; developing and implementing an effective system of accounting and maintaining accurate financial records. Other key responsibilities include providing leadership and direction to the Finance staff to ensure efficient use of human resources and developing strong working relationships with internal and external stakeholders. The position is a full time, exempt position located out of Bluesky's American Samoa Office. Please view www.bluesky.as for detailed job description.

PRE-REQUISITES/QUALIFICATION

- Requires a Bachelors Degree in Accounting and/or related field and membership of a recognised accounting body; CPA preferred
- Proven experience in managing and operating computerised accounting systems and integrated computerised systems
- High level knowledge of Telecommunications Industry, administrative, budgetary and accounting procedures
- Advanced knowledge of databases, spreadsheets and word processing, and computerised accounting systems
- Five or more years of experience in financial management with increasing responsibilities for multi-faceted direction, planning as well as staff management experience

Bluesky offers a competitive salary and benefits (annual leave, medical insurance, Simple IRA, discounts on products and services) for this position. Please view our website www.bluesky.as for the detailed job description for the Financial Controller vacancy. Salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience. Bluesky is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Interested and qualified candidates must submit a cover letter and resume or curriculum vitae to the Human Resources Department by Friday, February 17 2017:

- Email to as.jobs@blueskypacificgroup.com;
- Mail to 478 Laufou Center, Pago Pago, Am. Samoa 96799; or
- In person at the main office located in the Laufou Center 2nd Floor, Nuuli, Am. Samoa

More than 100 injured in fire at Philippines factory complex

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — More than 100 workers, including three Japanese, were injured and at least three were missing in a fire that hit a huge factory south of Manila and sent thousands of employees running to safety, an official said Thursday.

The fire at the House Technology Industries was under control but has not been fully extinguished nearly 18 hours after it started in General Trias town in Cavite province south of Manila, said Gov. Jesus Crispin Remulla. Firefighters hope to enter and inspect the factory later Thursday.

About 10 of the injured were in critical condition, Remulla told ABS-CBN TV news, adding some employees jumped from windows to escape the blaze at the three-story building where pre-fabricated house parts are manufactured for export to Japan.

The fire apparently started in a section where a machine used

to manufacture house insulation materials overheated, he said.

A third of about 15,000 employees were on duty when the fire struck and company officials were doing a count to find out if any more were missing at the sprawling factory compound located in a special economic zone in General Trias, about 26 kilometers (16 miles) south of Manila.

In 2015, a fire that rapidly spread in a rubber slipper factory in a northern Manila suburb killed 72 people, prompting then President Benigno Aquino III to order a thorough inspection of some 300,000 factories in metropolitan Manila alone. He ordered charges to be filed against the owners of the Kentex Manufacturing Corp. and local officials, who he said ignored the factory's failure to meet safety requirements.

The Kentex fire was one of the worst in the country after a 1996 disco blaze that killed 162 people in Manila.

