

the heartbeat

NEW DDFT CLASS ANNOUNCED FOR SUMMER 2017

The Doctors and Dentists for Tomorrow program is thrilled to announce that a second DDFT cohort will begin instruction in May 2017 on the National Campus of the College of Micronesia FSM. The second cohort will build upon the success of the first group of DDFT students who were recruited from all four states of the FSM who began instruction in summer 2016. They are now in their third semester of instruction at the College of Micronesia FSM, as they prepare to become the future healthcare providers and leaders of the FSM.

Mr Robert Spegal, the DDFT Program Manager, and a long-time resident of Pohnpei, will be recruiting from the high schools in each of the four states in February and March 2017. He will be looking for high-performing and dedicated students who are committed to becoming the future healthcare leaders and providers of Micronesia. Students should have a passion for helping Micronesia address

healthcare issues, such as non-communicable diseases, and a desire to help people directly.

‘I will be visiting the high schools in each of the four States of FSM looking for the best and the brightest, those who are willing to dedicate themselves to becoming the FSM’s doctors and dentists of tomorrow!’

-Mr Robert Spegal, DDFT Program Manager

DDFT is an intensive two-and-a-half year pre-medical and pre-dental program that prepares students to compete for entry into regional medical and dental schools, as well as preparation for entry into upper-division baccalaureate pre-health programs at regional undergraduate universities. To learn more about this high-intensity program for success, please see the last page of this newsletter.

Know someone who would make a great doctor or dentist?

The DDFT program is accepting applications as of February 2017. If you know of a graduating high school senior, or other member of the community, who has the passion and drive to be a great healthcare provider and leader, then we want to know about them! To learn more about the program, and how to apply, contact Mr Robert Spegal, DDFT Program Manager, at robertspegal@yahoo.com.



The Success Issue

- > successful first cohort leads to second DDFT
- > what it takes to succeed with Danny Wyatt
- > student profiles of success
- > docs and dentists share keys to success
- > student successfully earn lifesaving skills
- > study skills expert shares success formula

Mindset or Set Shot?

What kind of mindset do you bring to DDFT?

Danny Wyatt, Study Skills Consultant

College isn't for everyone; fortunately, students can afford to at least TRY college through financial aid if their family doesn't have the savings readily available to pay for it themselves. Yet, once students arrive on campus and settle into their classes, many realize they aren't quite prepared for the higher level of work and, worse still, don't commit to working hard enough to get past that obstacle. Interestingly, a basketball player doing poorly in the classroom, may be on the basketball court, miss several shots yet still call for the pass to come his way so he can try again. When we enjoy doing what we are doing, we're more than willing to fail time-after-time. Yet, when we fail in school, we decide that we're not cut out for college or 'It's too hard.' Better yet, 'It's boring.'

What's wrong with this picture? What's wrong is the 'mindset' that the student has on the basketball court is different than the 'mindset' in the classroom. Our basketball player knows that he has to practice to improve. He spends hours on the basketball court missing shot after shot, dribbling off his foot and double-dribbling for hours. Amazingly he doesn't give up. Over time he starts making free throws and corner shots; he still misses, but he starts making shots too. Making shots leads to more enthusiastic practice. And soon enough his foot becomes less of an obstacle to his dribbling, and he dribbles less-and-less looking down at the ball. Sure enough, with enough time, he's actually chosen to play when teams are divided. He's gotten pretty good. That willingness to practice, miss and try again is the **growth mindset**. He knows practice will help him get better and he spends hours practicing and getting better. The proof is in the shots he's making that he used to miss.

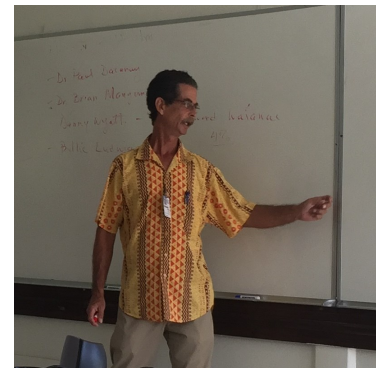
Meanwhile back in the math, English, or chemistry classroom, our basketball player gets frustrated when he doesn't understand the vocabulary and figures he's 'just not good at' math or whatever. So rather than study the classwork, he kind of reads his textbook once, then his class notes quickly, and he hopes for the best come test-time. Or worse still, he waits to study until a day or two before the test and then is shocked when his score is less than passing. His poor test performance just confirms what he thinks he knows about himself already – 'I'm just no good at' math, anatomy or whatever. This is the **fixed mindset** – the idea that 'I was born this way and I never got better.' It's the mindset that allows us to fail repeatedly and not take responsibility for our failure. After all, 'I was born this way and I never got better.'

How can I get the growth mindset? To succeed in college, students need to approach classes like the basketball player and practice. Adopt a growth mindset. By putting in the time to read the chapter and take notes, study, practice,

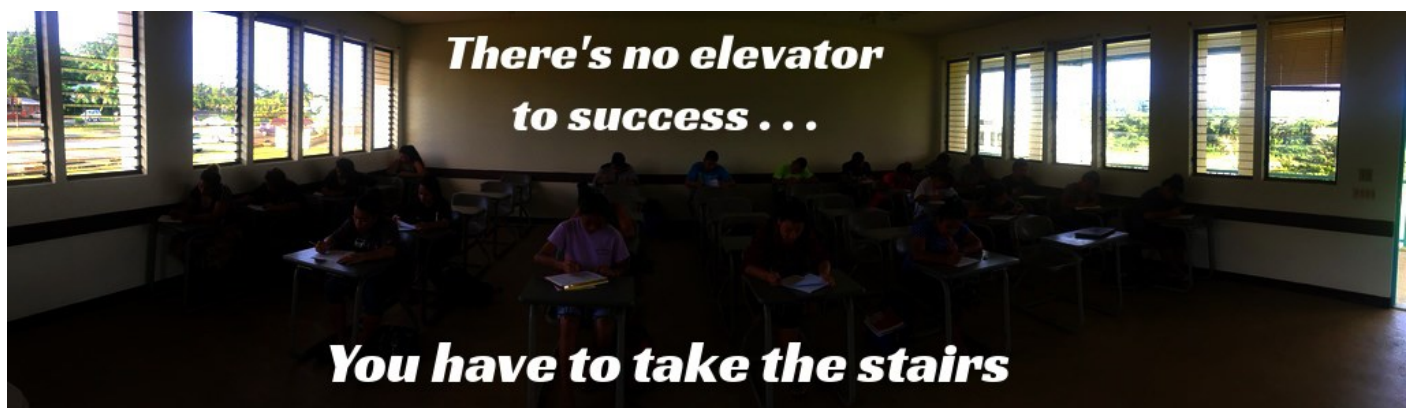
form study groups and discuss classwork, success will gradually build. The failing quiz scores will become barely passing quiz scores and over time they will result in Bs and As. More amazing still, instead of homework being work, it becomes interesting and enjoyable. Academic success is merely a matter of mindset – growth mindset. When studying is viewed as a skill that needs to be practiced, improvement will come.

According to the Basketball-Reference website, Steph Curry's highest shooting percentage for three-point shots was in the 2011-12 season. He shot .455%. That's less than half the three-point shots he took falling through the hoop, yet he's celebrated as one of the very best basketball players in the NBA. Highlight reels show him dribbling around defenders every time he plays. He wasn't born that way. He practiced! That's growth mindset at work. That same approach will make students successful in school too. The question is...

What kind of mindset do you bring to DDFT?



Danny Wyatt is an internationally recognized study skills specialist, and consultant to the DDFT program. He helped 'kick start' the first DDFT cohort in summer 2016 with his unique brand of enthusiasm for success through planning and mindset. Wyatt is a well-known figure in both Pohnpei, having been part of the Pacific Basin Medical Officers' Training Program, as well as across the USAPI. Wyatt is based at the University of Hawai'i Leeward Community College, and will be consulting on the second DDFT cohort for summer 2017.



Formula for Success

Following the presentations by Drs Hedson, Tim, and Dever, The Heartbeat asked Ms Holly Lyons, DDFT Study Skills Specialist, what additional tips for success she would recommend to students.

- Work hard / treat school like a job that you want to be successful at
- Study hard / use your time wisely, you should be studying 2-3 hours per week for every hour you spend in class
- Be in class and labs every day / you miss valuable information when you're not in class
- Have a study group / work with a group of friends, and quiz each other often
- Have a study schedule and stick to it
- Learn new material every day / make sure you understand what was discussed in class
- Have a vision of what you want to become, and believe in it
- Don't underestimate yourself
- Have a positive attitude
- Ask your professors for help when you need it

Docs and Dentists Share Keys to Success

Medical and dental school is challenging. But the rewards are significant if you dedicate yourself to hard work and a vision of making Micronesia a healthier, happier place. That was the message shared by multiple physicians and dentists from across the region to the DDFT students during several recent meetings. One of the key elements of the DDFT program is the provision of special seminars, speakers, and opportunities for students, such as having the chance to hear from local physicians and dentists.

Dr Hedson, General Surgeon Students heard from Dr Hedson who is a consultant general surgeon and chief of staff at Pohnpei State Hospital, and attended medical school in Papua New Guinea before returning home to provide surgical care. Dr Hedson reminded students that he was from a small island, and that if someone like him could succeed and live the dream of becoming a physician, then so could they. But Dr Hedson cautioned the students that it wasn't easy, and if they wanted to succeed, they needed to want it more than anything else, and work hard to achieve it! Dr Hedson then shared exciting stories from his days as a surgical registrar in PNG, such as seeing tribesmen from distant villages brought to the hospital with spear wounds.



Dr Hedson, General Surgeon, Dr Dever, Paediatrician, and Dr Tim, Dentist, share advice with DDFT students on how to be successful

Dr Tim, Dentist Students also heard from Dr Tim, who is a dentist with Pohnpei State Hospital, and a graduate of the Fiji School of Medicine (now part of Fiji National University). Dr Tim also shared his formula for success, which included hard work, but also working closely with friends and fellow students in study groups. Dr Tim then spoke candidly with the students, and stated that dental school had been a challenge for him, but that through dedication and persistence he succeeded!

Dr Dever, Paediatrician In a separate success seminar, students had the chance to meet with Dr Greg Dever, a paediatrician trained at the John A. Burns School of Medicine, who has worked as a clinician, educator, and healthcare leader in the Pacific for over forty years, including ten years in Pohnpei as the director of the Pacific Basin Medical Officers' Program. Dr Dever is currently with the Pacific Island Health Officers' Association, one of several agencies who have partnered to bring the DDFT program to Micronesia. Dr Dever thanked the students for their willingness to be part of the DDFT program, and how proud he was of their hard work and dedication as they strive to become the healthcare leaders and providers of tomorrow. Dr Dever emphasized having a positive attitude as one of the key elements of success in the program, and advised the students to always seek help from their faculty if they are struggling.

Medical Oddities and Trivia

Energy Drinks Lead to Heart Attack

Why would a healthy 26-year-old man be brought to the emergency room by paramedics for a heart attack? He wasn't overweight, didn't eat fast food three meals a day, and even played sports. After stabilizing the patient, doctors wanted to know why the young man had suffered the heart attack. Talking to the patient, they learned that he consumed between five and ten caffeine-laden energy drinks every day for the past year. The report, which was published in the February 2015 issue of the journal *Case Report in Emergency Medicine*, speculated that large amounts of caffeine in the drink, as well as other harmful substances, possibly reduced blood flow to the coronary artery, causing a clot to form resulting in the heart attack. If you want to learn more about the dangers of energy drinks, which are commonly used by college students, please see the article in this month's The Heartbeat.

Snake Venom Treats High Blood Pressure

What does the Brazilian arrow-headed viper, a highly poisonous snake, have to do with treating blood pressure? In 1948, Brazilian physician and scientist Maurício Rocha e Silva discovered that the hormone bradykinin, which is present in the venom of the arrow-headed viper, lowered blood pressure. The discovery ultimately led to the development of a class of drugs known as angiotensin-converting-enzyme (ACE) inhibitors which are widely used to treat hypertension by causing blood vessels to relax.

Ring in the New Year Emergency-style

A 41-year-old woman in Australia had exciting plans for her New Year's Eve, including celebrating with family and friends at a lavish bash hosted at a local seaside resort. Instead, she spent it in the emergency department of her local hospital. The patient, who had suffered from asthma all her life, reached for her rescue inhaler after several friends lit up cigarettes and she began wheezing. But instead of just medication, she inhaled a loose earring that had become lodged in the inhaler. Friends called for an ambulance after the woman began coughing up blood and having difficulty breathing. According to a report published in the *British Medical Journal*, chest x-rays showed the earring lodged in right bronchus. The earring was removed via bronchoscopy (the insertion of a tube with a camera), and the patient made a full recovery. Perhaps that's what they mean by 'ringing' in the New Year!

Chocolate, Local Produce for Healthier Lives

If chocolate can be key to a happier, healthier life, who wouldn't want to hear about it? Well, that's what the DDFT students recently had the chance to learn about. The DDFT program was visited by Dr Douglas Taren, internationally recognized expert on nutrition and nutritional disorders, and Professor and Associate Dean of the Zuckerman College of Public Health at the University of Arizona. Dr Taren spoke to the DDFT students on the health benefits of chocolate, as well as how locally grown produce can be the key to longer, healthier lives for all Micronesians.

A Rx for Chocolate Dr Taren shared research on the effects of chocolate on various aspects of health, but in particular on anxiety and well-being. Citing numerous studies, Dr Taren showed how consuming chocolate that is at least seventy percent cacao, can help alleviate the symptoms of anxiety, as well as prevent depression. The DDFT students were cautioned that this was not a prescription to eat all of the chocolate they wanted, as the positive effects of the chocolate could be had from consuming a relatively small amount each day.

Local Produce Dr Taren also spoke on the benefits of locally grown produce as a means of preventing non-communicable diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. He stated that not only would growing and consuming more local produce help prevent many of the leading causes of death in Micronesia, but that local farming could be an economic boost for Micronesians. The advice of Dr Taren is similar to the work being done by the Island Food Community of Pohnpei, who advocate for the use of more local, and sustainable food systems. Dr Taren even stated that producing locally grown chocolate could be big business for Micronesia, and could also have the health benefits he spoke about.



Dr Taren meets with DDFT students and faculty

The speech was followed by a lively and interactive question and answer period between Dr Taren and the DDFT students. The DDFT students asked Dr Taren what vegetables were most suitable for growth in Micronesia, and which would have the greatest health benefits. Whether or not the hospitals in each of the states could grow their own vegetables for use in patient meals. If white chocolate had the same health benefits as milk chocolate. And others.

The DDFT program provides frequent special programs and internationally known guest speakers to give students a broader perspective on the healthcare issues facing Micronesia and the Pacific. DDFT believes this exposure will broaden students' horizons in seeking innovative solutions to the healthcare issues facing Micronesia, such as obesity and non-communicable diseases, and how similar settings across the globe are addressing these issues.

Energy drinks: More danger than energy

Students may use energy drinks, such as 5-hour Energy or Monster Energy Drink, to help stay alert as they study for examinations, or even just make it through the day after a long night with friends and Facebook. However, new research suggests that these drinks may offer more danger than energy. Energy drinks contain large amounts of caffeine and other substances which may be harmful to the body, including the heart and brain.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reports a total of thirty-four deaths since 2004 linked 5-hour Energy, Monster, and Rockstar energy drinks. Between 2005 to 2009, in the United States, energy drink related emergency department visits increased ten-fold. In 2008, there were 16,053 emergency department visits related to energy drinks. About 52% of those who visited emergency departments were aged 18 to 25.

What are the dangers?

Heart Problems The biggest risk from energy drinks appears to be heart problems. Caffeine can boost heart rate and blood pressure, as well as cause the heart to release calcium, which may lead to arrhythmias (irregular heart beat) and even heart attacks.

Miscarriage The FDA has received at least one report of a miscarriage linked to consumption of 5-hour Energy. Studies on the effect of high doses of caffeine on miscarriage have been mixed, with one showing a twofold increase in those who consume more than 200 mg of caffeine a day; while others show no link. Still, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology advises pregnant women to limit their caffeine consumption to less than 200 mg per day.



Caffeine content of different energy drinks.

Consuming more than 200 mg per day has been linked to health risks.

Alcohol Addiction Multiple studies show that combining energy drinks with alcohol, a common practice among college students, can be dangerous. Energy drinks allow students to stay awake longer, and consume more alcohol. A 2011 study found that college students who consume energy drinks with alcohol were 2.5 times more likely to be alcoholics than those who did not.

Drug Abuse Several studies have shown that energy drink consumption is linked to increased risk of drug abuse. Students may be more likely to experiment with drugs such as marijuana and others while under the stimulating effects of large amounts of caffeine found in energy drinks.

Difficulty Thinking Using energy drinks to stay up all night and study for exams isn't the best choice. The high levels of caffeine in energy drinks makes learning and recalling information more difficult on quizzes and exams.

What to Drink Instead

Need a replacement for your afternoon or midnight energy drink? Here's what our experts at The Heartbeat recommend for energy and health!

Smoothies Loads of local fruits and veggies can be used to make smoothies, such as bananas, papayas, mangoes, and others. This is a great way to boost your metabolism and get the energy you need while staying healthy.

Green Tea Much less caffeine than coffee, there are also loads of health benefits, including decreased risk of cancer and heart disease. There's also some evidence that green tea helps you think more clearly and react quicker – great things for DDFT students.

Protein Shakes Protein can help fight fatigue, and your body needs it to be healthy. But if you decide to invest in protein shakes, remember to combine them with some carbohydrates such as fruit or milk, to get the full energy boost you need to succeed!

Soy Milk Low in calories, high in protein, calcium, and vitamins, soy milk is a great way to get some much needed energy, stay hydrated, and get ready for the next patient.

Water The best energy drink of all – and it's free. Dehydration can really slow you down in the classroom and beyond. And nothing is better for beating dehydration than plain old water. Add some fruit slices or even a little lemon juice to add flavor and vitamins.

Fruit Juice A great source of vitamins and nutrients that can keep you moving from the classroom to the clinic. However, fruit juices may contain little fruit and lots of sugar, so read the label.

PROFILES IN SUCCESS

Kathleen Peckalibe / Yap

Originally from the beautiful island of Yap, Kathleen Peckalibe has always wanted to be a doctor. And while she hasn't figured out what kind of doctor, she knows that her island needs doctors, and in particular that it needs local doctors. 'I want to be a doctor because it's all I ever wanted, and also because my island



and people lack doctors, specifically doctors from the islands.'

This is one of the great benefits of the DDFT program, or that it is designed to prepare the next generation of local healthcare providers, who speak the language, understand the culture, and know both the joys and the hardships of living and working in the beautiful

Pacific. Studies of the interactions between physicians and patients have shown that when physician and patient speak the same language, that better care is delivered, and that the patient is more likely to take the advice of the physician. This is something Kathleen understands, which is one of the reasons she is keen to return to work at Yap State Hospital where she can make a difference in the lives of the people she knows and loves.

DDFT also offers hands-on experience and practical training. Kathleen believes this is one of the best part of the program, and in particular liked the CPR training, as well as the time she has spent at Pohnpei State Hospital rotating through the various departments. From the very first semester, DDFT students have the opportunity to observe physicians and dentists in the hospital and the clinics. Not only does this provide students with hands-on experience in a healthcare environment, but it also allows students to learn about the different medical specialties, and which one they might want to specialize in after medical school.

And while Kathleen does miss her family and friends back home, the encouragement from her DDFT family have allowed her to stay motivated. Plus, she states that the small nature of the campus, and access to the dormitories and cafeteria, have made her feel right at home. Encouraging students, and offering wrap-around support, such as study hall, counselling, and other services, is all part of the DDFT formula for success.

Joshua Gabriel / Pohnpei

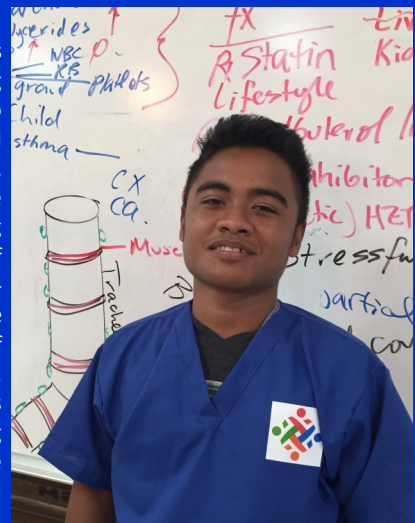
From the capital of the Federated States of Micronesia, Pohnpei, Joshua Gabriel knows what it takes to succeed, and that's cooperating and helping out his DDFT teammates. According to Joshua, cooperation and teamwork are one of the most important factors for success, and one of the things he loves most about being part of DDFT.

Teamwork is a critical part of the DDFT program, as well as being a healthcare provider. Beginning with the summer boot camp experience, DDFT students are taught to work together as a team; rotating the role of team leader each week, students learn how to assign tasks to other members of the team, following up to make sure that tasks are performed at a high level, and being responsible to the DDFT faculty for both the successes and failures of their team in weekly critiqued presentations. Such experience prepares the DDFT students for the hospital environment, where teams consisting of doctors, nurses, pharmacist, laboratorians, radiology technicians and others all work closely together to ensure high-quality patient care.

But DDFT isn't just about teamwork and getting the job done; according to Josh there's also time to be with friends, and grow closer to his DDFT family while living in the COM-FSM dormitories and eating at the cafeteria. In fact, Joshua said that the food is one of the best parts of the program, but is quick to also mention that he loves the fact that the classes are more challenging than high school. The DDFT program works on a cohort model, meaning that students work closely together, dine together, and even live in the dormitories. The cohort model has been shown to be very successful in helping students succeed in high-paced, challenging programs such as DDFT.

Having worked as an intern in the pharmacy at Pohnpei State Hospital, Josh has a strong interest in the role of drugs in the healthcare process. He is looking forward to the day that he can return to Pohnpei to work at Pohnpei State Hospital, because, 'Micronesia is in need of doctors, especially where I come from, so I want to be part of the workforce that helps save lives and make people healthier.'

The DDFT program was founded for young people like Josh, who realize the critical need for more physicians, and other healthcare providers, to bring quality care to all of Micronesia. As Micronesia continues to face a shortage of healthcare providers, the DDFT program is dedicated to helping Josh and others realize their goals of making a healthier Micronesia.



Students Successfully Earn Emergency Life-saving Skills

Doctors and Dentists for Tomorrow students recently earned certification in healthcare provider basic life support (BLS). DDFT students may be called upon to use their new skills at any time during their clinical rotation at the Pohnpei State Hospital and local dispensaries, or even in the community if they encounter an emergency. The training provided students with important skills that will help them become the future healthcare providers of the FSM. These included how to perform CPR on adults and children, either alone or with a second rescuer. CPR is a combination of chest compressions and rescue breathing used for someone whose heart isn't circulating blood properly, such as someone having a heart attack.

The DDFT student also learned how to use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), and how to combine the use of the AED with CPR. An AED is used to treat sudden cardiac arrest, a condition in which a person's heart stops unexpectedly. When this happens, blood flow to the brain and other vital organs stops. Ninety-five percent of people who suffer from sudden cardiac arrest die within minutes. Rapid access to someone who is trained in the use of CPR and AED, such as one of the DDFT students, can dramatically increase the chance of survival. According to the American Heart Association, early use of an AED in combination with CPR can more than double a victim's chance of survival. Hospitals, clinics, and even some schools and restaurants may be equipped with an AED.

The BLS training was provided in cooperation with the College of Micronesia FSM Division of Health Sciences, and MAHI International. MAHI is a local NGO that routinely partners with the College of Micronesia FSM, as well as healthcare providers and organizations across the FSM, to enhance the delivery of high-quality healthcare to all of Micronesia.



'We are so excited to bring this training to the DDFT students so that they have the skills they need as the future healthcare providers of the FSM.'

Dr Paul Dacanay, DDFT Faculty



Grand Rounds



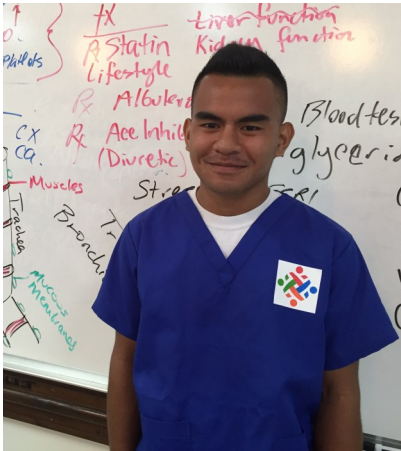
A 2-year-old female is brought to the Accident and Emergency Department at Colonial War Memorial Hospital in Suva by her parents. The parents state that the child was seen in the general outpatient department two days ago and was diagnosed with otitis media and treated with oral amoxicillin antibiotics. The child seemed to be improving until earlier in the day when she became irritable and less active than usual. The child is lethargic and can only be aroused to painful stimuli. Physical examination reveals that the child's fontanel is bulging, and there is significant neck rigidity (stiffness). The paediatrics registrar on call performs a lumbar puncture (spinal tap), with the CSF being visibly hazy. Gram stain of the CSF shows white blood cells and a few gram positive cocci (bacteria). What is the most likely diagnosis?

DDFT students: If you know the answer, email Dr Mangum. The first five correct answers will receive two points of extra-credit on the next examination.

PROFILES IN SUCCESS

Beewee W. Tara / Kosrae

From the Island of the Sleeping Lady, Kosrae, Beewee W. Tara, is proud to be part of the first cohort of DDFT students, and especially proud to be representing Kosrae in this important program. Beewee knows that there's a shortage of doctors in all of the states of the FSM, but especially in Kosrae, which is the



smallest of the four states of the FSM both in size and population. But according to Beewee, small or not, Kosrae deserves the best medical care available. Which is why he has decided to become a surgeon after medical school.

His decision to pursue surgery has been influ-

enced by several factors, including exposure to general surgeon Dr Johnny Hedson, as well as visiting consultants, during clinical rotations at Pohnpei State Hospital. DDFT students begin rotating through various departments in the hospital, including surgery, as well as outpatient clinics and public health, from the very beginning of the summer boot camp. Early exposure will allow students hands-on experience in the healthcare environment, as well as allow them to see what specialties they are most interested in. Beewee's choice is an important one, as there are few fully-trained surgeons in the FSM, and many of these are approaching retirement age. Surgery is a critical component of the healthcare team, as without access to a general surgeon many common procedures that are seen in hospitals like those in the FSM, could not be performed. The result would be higher costs to everyone as minor procedures are sent off island to the Philippines or elsewhere.

Beewee knows that the cost of becoming a surgeon is high, and includes hard work, dedication, and years of training. But he's dedicated to it, and knows that it will improve the lives of those living in Kosrae, and possibly even Chuuk, where he has also considered practicing. The DDFT program is giving Beewee the tools he needs to meet this goal. In fact, Beewee says that is one of his favorite things about DDFT is that faculty encourage you to work hard, and never give up! Plus, Beewee points out that there are plenty of fun things to do as well, like spending time in the library, playing basketball at the gym, or going to lunch in town with his DDFT family.

Esther Manong / Chuuk

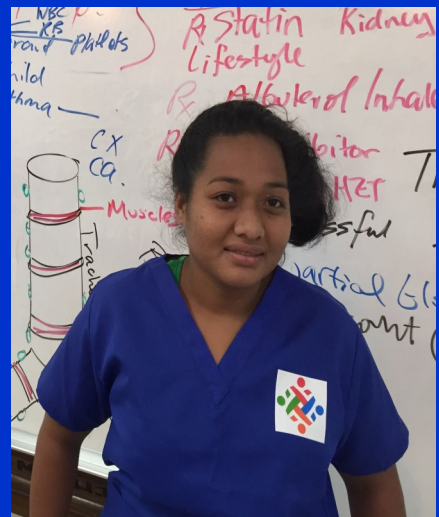
When Esther Manong, who hails from Chuuk, first arrived at the College of Micronesia FSM National Campus in Pohnpei, she was excited to not only be part of the DDFT program, but also to be living on the campus, which she describes as clean, quiet and fun. And despite missing her family—their laughter and their voices—Esther is dedicated to the DDFT program, which she describes as giving her a '...new home, new life, and a new start.'

DDFT couldn't be happier to have Esther in program, and like Esther, the DDFT faculty and staff want to make sure that all of our students feel the same way Esther does. That's why one of the critical elements of the program is the provision of support services to make sure that students succeed professionally in their classes, as well as having a supportive environment in which they can learn, grown, and feel at home. Program staff provide what is known as wrap-around services, including access to counsellors, special study sessions, guest lecturers, and other amenities that are designed to help students succeed. Esther recognizes this, and even stated that, 'What I like most are the special advanced lectures, and the support from our instructors.'

Esther knows what it takes to succeed, especially since she wants to be a surgeon, which is one of the most challenging, yet rewarding medical specialties. When asked why she wants to be a surgeon, Esther recalls how there always seems to be a need for a surgeon at the hospital, but that there aren't enough available. Lack of access to surgical services can be a real threat to the health of a country such as FSM. Esther's goal is not just to become a surgeon, but to return to her home state of Chuuk, and practice surgery locally. She says that she knows this will take 'courage,' but that she is ready to do it!

Returning to her home state to practice is one of the key elements of the DDFT program, or that we train Micronesians to become healthcare providers for other Micronesians. Studies show that doctors who come from a specific area or state are more likely to return to practice in that area when they complete their training. Because of this, DDFT recruited students from each of the four states of the FSM to be part of this important program. And impressively, each student has committed themselves to returning to their home state when they complete their training.

Such is testimony to the courage and dedication of students like Esther, who want to make their homes a healthier and more prosperous place.



What is DDFT?

The Doctors and Dentists for Tomorrow program is a two-and-a-half-year program to prepare high-performing students from the four states of the Federated States of Micronesia to be competitive for entry into regional medical and dental schools, as well as prepare for success in upper-level baccalaureate pre-medical and pre-dental programs at other Pacific Rim institutions of higher learning.

This intensive program includes a summer basic science 'boot camp' with courses taught in the problem-based learning (PBL) style, the standard format of instruction common in regional medical and dental schools, as well as other health science programs globally.

The summer boot camp is followed by two additional years of science courses which emphasize application of knowledge to clinical settings. A hallmark of the DDFT program is early access to clinical settings, with students rotating through hospitals, clinics, and the public health department. Students are given access to a range of wrap-around services to promote success, including mandatory study hall, tutoring sessions, counselling, special training courses, guest lecturers, international faculty, an emphasis on the health issues facing Micronesia, and much more.

Want to learn more?

Please contact Mr Robert Spegal, DDFT Program Manager, at robertspegal@yahoo.com

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<http://www.comfsm.fm/?q=publications>

Special thanks to COM-FSM for hosting The Heartbeat online.

More than just a pre-medical or pre-dental program ...

A preparatory program for leadership and success in Micronesia!

- Preparing Micronesians to be the Micronesian healthcare providers and leaders of tomorrow
- Intensive preparation for medical and dental school
- Preparation for upper-level bachelor's degree programs
- International faculty
- Early clinical exposure in hospitals and clinics
- Basic science summer boot camp
- Emphasis on PBL and applied clinical learning
- Wrap-around support services, such as study hall and counselling
- Emphasis on policy and prevention, not just medicine and dentistry
- Emphasis on learning public presentation and critical thinking skills through researching and proposing answers to FSM's leading causes of disease and death



Doctors and Dentists for Tomorrow (DDFT)

This project is funded from the Health Resources services Administration, an agency of the US Department of Health and Human Services, awarded to the John A. Burns School of Medicine Area Health Education Center of the University of Hawaii, and sub-awarded to the Pacific Island Health Officers' Association. DDFT is a joint program between these agencies and the College of Micronesia FSM. The faculty and staff of the DDFT would like to thank all of those organizations that have made this program possible, including the support of our many local partners across the Federated States of Micronesia.