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Guam Power Authority Graduates its 6th Apprenticeship Cycle

Sixteen apprentices complete three-to-four years of learning on the job

(Fadian, Mangilao) - The Guam Power Authority (GPA) announced today that 16 apprentices from the 6th Cycle Apprenticeship Program graduated on Friday, October 18, 2024. In a ceremony held at the Gloria B. Nelson Public Service Building at Fadian, Guam, GPA recognized 16 skilled professionals who completed three to four years of hands-on learning and mentorship by the professionals of GPA's Transmission & Distribution division, which also certifies them to apply for new roles as certified journeymen in GPA's workforce.

GPA General Manager John M. Benavente, P.E. said, "GPA's Apprenticeship Program is incredible training ground to shape the next generation of Transmission and Distribution experts. This succession plan allows us to invest in the best candidates, so we have the highest trained individuals to support the island-wide power system and help to take GPA into the future."

"I am confident these graduates will continue to provide the public with the highest possible grade of products and services, carrying on the legacy of their predecessors, serving our people, and becoming leaders in their industry," GM Benavente added.

GPA's power utility management and operations are dependent upon skilled labor. As we have said for many years, GPA faced serious challenges finding qualified professional and technical personnel in Engineering, IT, and especially in the Transmission and Distribution, and Generation fields.

Edward R. Leon Guerrero, Assistant Manager of Transmission and Distribution at GPA, is a former apprentice who graduated in 1998. As the keynote speaker of the ceremony, Leon Guerrero shared with the graduates, "You are the innovators, leaders, and changemakers of the future of GPA."

GPA would like to congratulate the 6th Cycle graduates on the successful completion of their program and commitment to excellence:

- Nathan-Zachary K. C. Aguero - Line Installer-Repairer, Underground
- Ana Emmarose L. Aguon - Electric Relay Technician
- Joseph F. Aguon - Electric Relay Technician
- Julien F. Bagcal - Line Installer-Repairer, Underground
- Manuel J. B. Borja - Line Installer-Repairer, Underground
- Jeremy E. Cruz - Electrician, Substation
- Vito P. Guerrero - Electric Relay Technician
- Tovin G. Mesa - Line Installer-Repairer, Overhead
- Joseph A. Pereda - Line Installer-Repairer, Overhead
- Richard R. Quichocho - Line Installer-Repairer, Overhead
- James J. D. San Nicolas - Line Installer-Repairer, Underground
- Zachary Q. Santos - Line Installer-Repairer, Overhead
- Thomas J. M. Sarmiento - Line Installer-Repairer, Underground
- Carl J. Tainatongo - Electrician, Substation
- Matthew J. A. Toves - Line Installer-Repairer, Overhead
- Calvin B. Valentine - Electrician, Substation

Leon Guerrero added, "We are proud of our graduates, many of whom were born and raised on Guam. We also thank their mentors for their commitment to equipping our apprentices with academic knowledge and real-world experiences. I was in their place 26 years ago, and I have enjoyed a fulfilling career with GPA serving our residents. I'd like to encourage anyone who is interested in a solid career in utilities or engineering to consider applying for the next apprenticeship cycle."

In 2004, GPA collaborated with the Guam Community College and the Agency for Human Resources Development to reinstate the Apprenticeship Program with a goal to develop skilled team members to fill the technical workforce needed at the utility. GPA noted that interest in the program continues to grow. Earlier in 2024, GPA added the 7th Cycle, which consists of about 20 apprentices across T&D and the Power Systems Control Center. The 7th Cycle will be graduating in three to four years.

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