

habele



Annual Report of the Habele Outer Island Education Fund, 2016

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Yap Proper

- Habele Scholars
- Scholarship Schools
- Library Projects
- Waa'gey Carving Clubs
- Robotics League



Neighboring Islands of Yap

- Habele Scholars
- Library Projects
- Waa'gey Carving Clubs

*ROP

- Library Projects

*RMI
- Library Projects

Chuuk Lagoon

- Scholarship Schools
- Library Projects

Pohnpei

- Library Projects

Neighboring Islands of Chuuk

- Habele Scholars
- Library Projects
- Waa'gey Carving Clubs

Finances

Highly efficient, Habel delivers high outcomes at low costs

Income

Individual Donations	\$12,635	75.6%
Corporate Donations	\$1500	9.0%
Directors/Disqualified	\$2,580	15.4%
TOTAL INCOME		\$16,715

Expenses

Program		
Tuition Scholarships	\$7,008.75	48%
LEAD Scholar	\$5,326.96	36%
Waa'gey Canoe Carving	\$679.60	5%
Libraries & Literacy	\$600.02	4%
Robotics	\$357.79	2%
PROGRAM SPENDING		95%

Administration		
Website & IT	\$532.69	3.6%
Financial Fees	\$132.48	0.9%
State Registration	\$50	0.3%
Publications	\$20	0.1%
ADMINISTRATION SPENDING		5%

TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$14,708.29
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Tuition Scholarships

High yield investments in the future of individual students

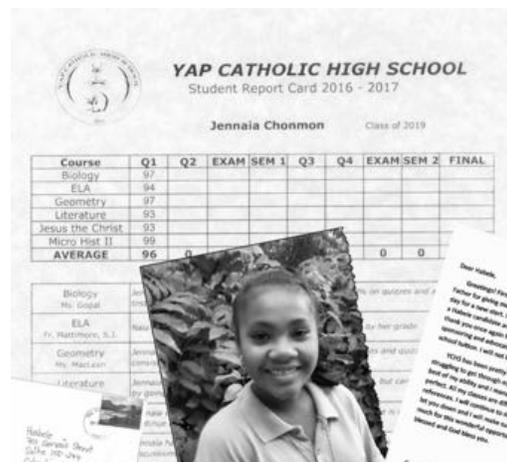
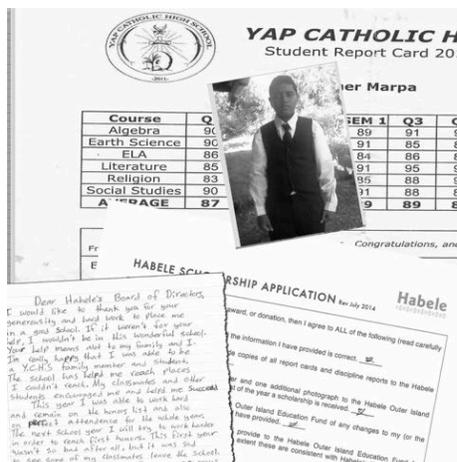
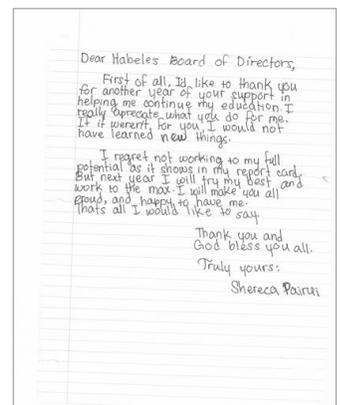
A dozen students from across Micronesia enrolled in prestigious private schools in 2016-17 with the help of Habele tuition scholarships. Attendance at these schools radically increases the children's' chances of completing school and moving on to higher education.

The investment isn't coming from a top-down government aid program or an influence peddling foreign conglomerate, it arrives care of Habele, a tiny all-volunteer charity funded entirely by individual Americans with a personal commitment to Micronesia.

The students, whose families come from isolated islands and atolls throughout Yap and Chuuk States, have been awarded tuition assistance covering 50 to 100 percent of the cost of their 2016-17 enrollment. They will be attending top ranked independent K-12 schools on the islands of Yap, Chuuk and Pohnpei. Most will live with relatives or sponsors for the length of the school year.

Picturesque and strategically located, the far-flung islands of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) struggle with isolation and limited natural resources. For decades, the crudely named "Office of Insular Affairs" at the US Department of the Interior has managed huge government-to-government payments to Micronesia, making the FSM the world's largest per capita recipient of US foreign aid. That OIA controlled money has translated into neither broad educational access, nor measured educational accomplishment for most Micronesian students. The void represents a staggering need for privately funded efforts such as Habele's.

Since 2006, Habele has provided over \$68,000 in tuition assistance, funding individual students, not districts or schools.



LEAD Scholar

Cultural exchange as a bridge to higher education

Habele's "LEAD," or Leadership, Exchange, and Academic Development, is an intensive summer program for Habele scholars with strong potential for future leadership.

Based on the traditional host family model, this program fosters cultural, social and intellectual exchanges between Micronesian students and their American peers. The multilateral approach to developing mutual understanding and cooperation imbues participating scholars with increased perspective and capacity to drive sustainable regional development in Micronesia.

Bertha Hathomar, the 2016 LEAD scholar, is a native to a remote, underserved community in the Outer Islands of Yap State, Micronesia. Following the destruction wrought by Super Typhoon Maysak in 2015, the educationally displaced student received a Habele Tuition Scholarship to attend a prestigious private school in the district capital of Yap. While living with a Yapese host family, Bertha demonstrated tremendous academic focus and ability, earning high marks in all courses of study.

That Habele Tuition Scholarship provided an initial springboard for Bertha's pursuit of greater social and academic horizons. Then, through LEAD, she further accessed studies and cultural exchanges rarely available to socially vulnerable Outer Island women, spending two months living in the American State of South Carolina.

Formal instruction included courses in filmmaking and cooking and nutrition at the Honors College of the University of South Carolina. Further academic enterprises included preparation for college entrance exams, and visits to local colleges and universities.

Additionally, Bertha enrolled in a variety of arts and crafts workshops provided by the Columbia Museum of Art. While maintaining a full schedule of classes, Bertha made time for guitar lessons, karate classes, and even a dog-training course.

Artistic and cultural exchange played a prominent role in the experience, with the Habele scholar attending a variety of musical concerts, community theater productions, and visiting some of the nation's premiere museums. These opportunities



were complemented by regular participation in the day-to-day lives and social activities of a diverse group of American families.

Leadership development was a consistent theme of the LEAD program. Bertha interacted with local and national leaders, including Katrina Shealy, an accomplished female State Senator from South Carolina who consistently advocates for vulnerable communities.

She also met Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen, American Samoa’s delegate to the United States Congress, and a voice for the international development of democratic institutions. During a trip to Washington, DC, Bertha visited the Federated States of Micronesia’s Embassy, meeting with officials from her national government.



Waa'gey

Cultural skills as a vehicle for students' development

In May of 2016, three hand-carved sailing canoes landed on Guam, completing a five-day voyage across the open ocean from Yap State. This arduous five day trek highlights the ongoing success of Waa'gey, a Hablele equipped Yap-based mentorship program that trains island youth in traditional canoe carving and navigation. The voyage between Yap State and Guam served to bridge both time and cultures.

“Waa'gey students are trained to see the value in the traditions of our ancestors,” said Larry Raigetel of Lamotrek Atoll, the group's Program Director. “They learned to build a large sailing canoe with their own two hands, and put traditional navigation into practice on a real voyage. The old ways still work.”

The canoes used were “Carolina Proas,” complex all wood outriggers designed, perfected, and made famous by Micronesians over centuries. Larry oversaw the project, captaining one of the sleek vessels that early Spanish missionaries called, “flying proas.” Designing, building and navigating traditional canoes requires tremendous expertise.

The Lucky Star, one of the three canoes from Lamotrek, used a completely hand woven pandanus sail. This is the only fully traditional sail employed by any canoe on the voyage, or even attending the Festival of Pacific Arts, the Pacific-wide event which drew the sailors to Guam.

Historically, Outer Islanders traded woven skirts and mats for canoes built on Yap Proper. This was part of a complex trade network spanning hundreds of miles across the Caroline Islands, Guam, and even the Marianas.

Today, the promise of healthcare, education and employment has drawn Outer Islanders to the larger, more developed islands in Micronesia. Many Micronesians have taken the further step of migrating to Guam or Hawaii, an option afforded them through the Compact of Free Association between the US and Micronesia.

For a decade now, Waa'gey has used mentored canoe building to help tackle contemporary social and environmental challenges across Yap State. This mission is driven by the belief that traditional values and skills have an ongoing role in teaching young people to confront modern challenges. The young men who arrived in Hagåtña are a testament to Waa'gey's success.



"For thousands of years, our people have been healthy and happy on tiny island atolls," explained Raiget. "Traditional practices taught us to use natural resources, and also protect them. Our cultures have withstood a lot of change over the centuries, but we're dealing with more outside influences than ever. We're also aware of the threat rising sea levels pose to low-lying islands. It's not a theory. It's real to us. This voyage to Guam is something the boys are quite proud of, but it's just one symbol of the hard work and challenges they face in navigating Micronesia's -and their own- future."



Libraries & Literacy

Targeted donations supporting local educators

Habele is a 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to the advancement of educational opportunities in the remote islands and atolls of Micronesia. Created by former Peace Corps Volunteers, we provide literacy donations, in addition to our tuition scholarships, student exchanges, and support for extracurricular programs across Micronesia.

Native Island educators and Peace Corps Volunteers serving in public schools look to Habele for age- and audience-appropriate books they can use in classrooms and libraries. Often they request hard to obtain texts dealing with Island-specific topics.

It is easy for you to help put quality reading materials in the hands of eager Island students:

Either, you can gather books, box them up, and send the weight, dimensions, and number of books to Habele (701 Gervais, Ste 150-244, Columbia SC 29201), which will provide you pre-paid postal labels, address stickers and import documentation;

You can make a financial donation to Habele that will pay for the purchase of books and the costs of sending others' donations! Visit Habele.org and click on the Paypal link to the right.

In 2016 Habele supported Peace Corps Librarians and native Micronesian educators in Palau, Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and the Marshalls.



Robotics

Hands on STEM for eager and ambitious students

On Tuesday, May 24th, Yap Catholic High School (YCHS) hosted the annual “Yap Robo-Day” thanks to donations from the Habele Foundation.

“Yap Robo-Day” was held at the Community Center from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM. Despite the torrential downpour, the twenty-five students in the club still carried on with their robotics demonstrations for more than 100 visitors to the event. The students made repairs and improvements to their robots and even taught some visitors how to drive and operate the different robots. The event was made possible in part by the generosity of Matson, who has invested in this cutting-edge technology program.

The Robotics Club had started working on their robots in January of this year under the guidance of their faculty moderators, Mr. Michael Wiencek and Ms. Devi Gopal. This year, two senior students, Armhel Pigao and Kobe Sacres, served in the leadership roles of project contractors for the club.

YCHS produced a record number of four different robots, as well as a few side projects as well including a miniature race car and an electric guitar made out of Legos. This STEM oriented activity gives students the opportunity to explore their interest in possible science and engineering related careers in the future, while also developing their collaboration and leadership skills.

The Yap Catholic High School community also raised \$390 through their fundraising food and drink sale at the event.

Habele is an all-volunteer nonprofit expanding educational access and accomplishment in the Caroline Islands (Micronesia). It supplies targeted, on-demand donations to educators and extracurricular programs, as well as needs-based scholarships to individual students.



Habele Leadership

Volunteers coordinating the generosity of others'

Neil Mellen (President) Neil is a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute, and a former Peace Corps Volunteer (Yap Outer Islands 2002- 05), whose editorial columns have appeared in the Wall Street Journal, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, and papers across the Carolinas. Mr. Mellen led the effort to enact a tax credit funded scholarship program for disabled students in South Carolina. He also served on that state's Educational Broadband Service Commission.

Alex Sidles (Secretary) is an attorney and former classroom teacher with experience in Chuuk and Yap States (2000-03). Mr. Sidles served as a Senior Staff Non-Commissioned Officer in the United States Marine Corps and is a veteran of four deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Marc MacNamara (Treasurer) is a former Peace Corps Volunteer who served as a community health adviser and classroom teacher (Republic of Madagascar 2003-2005). Mr. McNamara is a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute who served as an analyst at the United States Department of State.

Regina Raiget (Director) attended Xavier High School and the College of Micronesia. She serves as the United States Peace Corps' Field Representative in the State of Yap. She has also worked for the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JICA) as well as the Federated States of Micronesia National Office of Planning and Budget.

Maureen Nunn (Director) is an author, teen guidance counselor, and award-winning television host. She is active in a range in of nonprofits, philanthropic, and education organizations based in Southern California, including Faith in Practice, a charity working in Guatemala.

Stephen Replegle (Director) is a Principal with Cove Strategies, where he advises fortune 500 companies and associations on policy and public affairs strategies. Most recently, Mr. Replegle served as a senior federal relations advocate for Walmart in Washington, D.C. In the past, Mr. Replegle worked in the United States Senate, U.S. Department of Commerce and the White House. Key policy responsibilities ranged from technology, intellectual property, economic development, international trade.

Obituary

Peter Pakemai, a far-sighted traditionalist died in January 2017 on Yap, a Micronesian Island at the strategic crossroads of the Pacific.

Not many foreign visitors come to Yap. These beautiful islands at the world's end see only a handful of divers and eco-tourists, and the occasional descendent of a Pacific War veteran, eager to catch a glimpse of the paradise described in childhood stories. Ever one of them, whether they knew it or not, passed the old man.

Peter Pakemai was easy enough to miss in the bustle of the canoe house. A small, wizened figure carving silently in a circle of younger men laughing and chewing betelnut. The other carvers knew who he was. A master canoe builder and craftsman, Pakemai's hands transformed wood with encyclopedic knowledge of days gone by.

Where others saw only trees in groves of native hardwoods, Pakemai's eyes saw the parts and pieces of traditional canoes, hewn with expert care from the trunks and branches. Pakemai's mind could see the sleek canoe in the wood, and his hands could realize the vision. Most important of all, his careful words could guide a young carver to do the same.

Keels of Caroline Islands canoes are formed from hollowed-out tree trunks, carved with adze blades and painstaking focus. Perfectly flush side planks are tied and fitted with handspan ropes of coconut fiber. Everything appears symmetrical. Sternposts and stems protrude up from the keel in forks that resemble the outstretched tongue of a lizard. Steadied by an outrigger, the mast and sail are fully adjustable, allowing the craft to sail windward up to 75 degrees off the wind. Baffled Spanish sailors and missionaries termed them, "Flying Proas," astounded that isolated pagans - without metal tools and written language - could build the graceful craft that seemed to glide above the water.

In many ways, Pakemai was no less a foreigner to Yap than the handful of visitors who stopped to chat with the boys in the canoe house. He was an outsider with a deep, earnest -but subtly pragmatic- commitment to tradition.

The Carolines are thousands of tiny islands, mostly low lying, isolated coral atolls. Languages and customs vary little one to the next, only more discernable when the latitudinal extremes are juxtaposed. The Islands of Yap Proper are an exception;

sixty square miles of nearly contiguous land within a single reef, land rising above 500 feet. In language and culture too, the Yapese remain an anomaly, still confusing Western scholars.

For hundreds of miles to the east and west, a complicated system of trade and tribute, connected the Outer Islands to Yap. Fine crafts, textiles, and food stuffs were gathered, consolidated on the Atoll of Ulithi, and sent to the villages of Gatchepar and Wanyan in the Gagil district on Yap. Integral to the exchange was inter-island support in times of resource shortages, especially following the western Pacific's devastating typhoons. In this narrow context, peoples from the Neighboring Islands were afforded refuge and hospitality during their annual visits to Yap, and provided a place within Yap's traditional caste system. It was the exception proving the rule of Yap's cautious, insular attitude to outsiders.

Foreign powers –Spanish, German, Japanese, and then American– were more interested in control of a strategically situated region, than bringing the Micronesian's into the modern world. They sought bases, and the Japanese used these on their way to attacking Pearl Harbor, and the ability to deny access to rival nations. Still, Spanish missions, German restrictions on canoeing, Japanese schooling, and American hospitals and government jobs drove ever-more Outer Islanders to Yap. Pakemai came to the main island of Yap to visit his son Larry, whose degree from an American university degree earned him a job with the nascent Micronesian government.

While visiting, Pakemai met young boys whose families had arrived from his own island of Lamotrek. The boys shared his language and culture, but had never set foot in the village of Lugelap or speared a fish on the Ochfaimagwu reef. Still foreigners on Yap, they lacked the skills and life experiences that defined the Remathau, the "People of the Sea." Peter P. Pakemai had seen great changes since his christening sometime in the 1930s by a Spanish priest in Japanese controlled Micronesia, but this was too much. The boys were adrift.

Larry, the second of Pakemai's four sons, urged him to stay on Yap, hinting at a bold approach to mentor the lost boys. The young men needed to be trained by masters, and that meant the masters needed to come to them. This was no small suggestion. Traditional skills being passed down off-island was jarring on it's own. Allowing the skills to be transmitted outside of longstanding family lines was heresy. Pakemai saw beyond the tension. Training had to adapt or be lost.

Confident in his mission, Pakemai approached his skeptics with tenacious humility, always eager to show respect and propriety. It wasn't enough to model behavior



for the boys from Lamotrek. Pakemai wanted even the doubters to see the unassuming value of his vision.

The boys in the canoe house know the value. Every stroke of the adze blade, every graceful line they carve on the Flying Proas is a tribute to the old man. He no longer sits on the wood chips under the thatch, but his son Larry Raigetel passes the vision to Outer Islanders who will never know Pakemai. Through their NGO, "Waa'gey," he preserves native technologies to protect the distinctive Outer Island identity, and solve problems tied to import dependency, urbanization, and unemployment. Challenges unaddressed by, and in some cases tied to, government-to-government aid are instead tackled person-to-person.



Habele

ha 'be•le

1. V: to realize a future; figuratively, to wish [compound of *to make* and *to be*]
2. N: nonprofit advancing educational access & accomplishment across Micronesia



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