



# Hats off to Ebeye's new jaki-ed apprentices



Expert weaver Tobep Bokin from Ujae, promoter of the jaki-ed program revival Maria Fowler, and expert weaver Susan Jieta from Mejit. Inset: Drile Kili Kabua, who spoke on behalf of the iroij. Top: Big smiles from all at the ceremony, including Iroij Imata Kabua, center standing. Photos: Tamara Greenstone Alefaio.

Over 60 young women from around the Marshall Islands have now completed the Jaki-ed Revival Program's apprenticeship workshops, with the latest group of 10 weavers graduating from the Ebeye program late last month.

"The Ebeye apprentices' joy and sense of fulfillment was clearly the same as all the other graduations we have attended," said Dr. Irene Taafaki, Director of the University of the South Pacific's Majuro campus, which coordinates the jaki-ed program. "It was very confirming to see the strong community support for the girls.

Plus you could see that a community of weavers had begun to form, which is really a key to the making of jaki-ed."

Iroij Imata Kabua and Ebeye Council members were amongst the VIPs

who attended the graduation, which was held at the weavers' workspace, Iroij Mike Kabua's 'Mon La-Mike.' Drile Kili Kabua spoke on behalf of the Iroij, expressing their happiness at the workshop having been held on Ebeye.

"Encouraged by the support of community leaders, we now have plans to take these young women and give them further skills," Taafaki said.

The Ebeye weavers had a sharper learning curve than women from the other islands that still include weaving in their daily life.

"None of these young ladies had any substantial experience with weaving, but even so expert weaver Tobep Bokin from Ujae gave them a very sound set of basic skills to build on in the future."

Bokin was assisted in conducting the course by Susan Jieta and Henrietha Patrick.

Harden Lelet of the RMI National Training Council, which funds the jaki-ed apprenticeship program, also spoke

at the ceremony: "Our hats go off to the group of young women who have shown true commitment and sacrifice over the past four months."

USP's Coordinator of Continuing and Community Education Tamara Greenstone Alefaio was equally pleased with the Ebeye program's outcome.

"Like previous USP apprenticeships, a family environment was created where the expert weavers and the novice weavers bonded beyond the programs expectations.

"Deep friendships and a sense of responsibility for one another developed intensely among the group with the weaving circle becoming a safe place to talk with elders and peers about family life, struggles, culture, health, weaving and beyond.

"This has become one of the major positive outcomes of the weaving apprenticeship programs from USP. The jaki-ed are important, but it's not just about the weaving."

# EPA: Hospital water not safe

Water at Majuro Hospital is not suitable as a main water source, the RMI EPA told the Ministry of Health earlier this month.

Tests taken at the end of May at Wellness Center water taps showed high electrical conductivity, which indicates salt contamination.

The water was from Majuro Water and Sewer Company's "Treatment Plant A."

"The electrical conductivity (EC) readings for both samples exceed our standard," said Abraham Hicking, EPA's Chief of Water Quality.

"The EC is too high for use as main water source for the hospital," he added.

"The hospital ought to install its own RO unit in order to supply the wards, kitchen, offices and laboratories with clean, decent

quality water." The tests showed EC levels at over 2,300 and 2,400, respectively. Hicking said 2,000 is the limit. Anything over this is considered unsafe to use.

"Salty water conducts electricity more readily than purer water," according to an Australian government water quality program.

"Therefore, electrical conductivity is routinely used to measure salinity."

Hicking commented: "The source of water now supplying the hospital is too salty for personal hygiene or use in the hospital facility."

Hicking recommended shutting down Treatment Plant A immediately since it provides water not recommended for hospital use.

## High chlorine levels in city water

RMI EPA has identified problems with Majuro's city water during regular tests of water quality. In a report issued Thursday, EPA Water Quality Chief Abraham Hicking said the airport reservoir water tests showed highly salt-contaminated water that is not safe for consumption. A test of the MWSC system in Jenrok also showed high salt levels through a test for "electrical conductivity" that indicates salt content in water.

Tests of MWSC water in Delap, Uliga, Small Island and Rita showed safe levels

of salt content. But, said Hicking, the tests at Small Island showed "very high" chlorine levels that could "cause consumers to complain about the smell and taste of the water." He recommended that MWSC reservoir and treatment plant operators record the levels of chlorine in water before they turn on the pump for public water consumption.

Hicking said that "re-sampling of all of the DUD area should be continuous as the quality of the water does not remain steady due to water rationing."

**MIOAW MAJURO**  
 mioawmajuro@yahoo.com  
 mioawmajuro.org  
 Yearly memberships \$50  
 T-Shirts \$15  
 All proceeds go to helping bring the vets to Majuro.

**MAJURO ATOLL WASTE COMPANY**  
 Kopej in moña im keinnikan rej aikuij in jenoklok jen doon im bojak nan air aljek ilo Saturday otemjej.

**AA Meetings**  
 6:30pm Tuesdays & Thursdays  
 at CMI room RH122