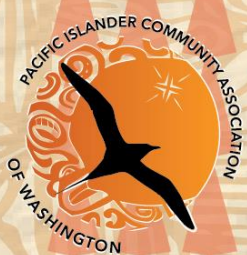


Pacific Islander Community Association of WA (PICA-WA)

Wednesday, September 11, 2024

Presentation by: Kiana McKenna (she/her)



"E fofo le alamea le alamea."

The remedy for the toxic sting of the Crown of Thorns starfish is the Crown of Thorns starfish itself.

-Samoan Proverb

**We inherently have what we need
to heal ourselves.**



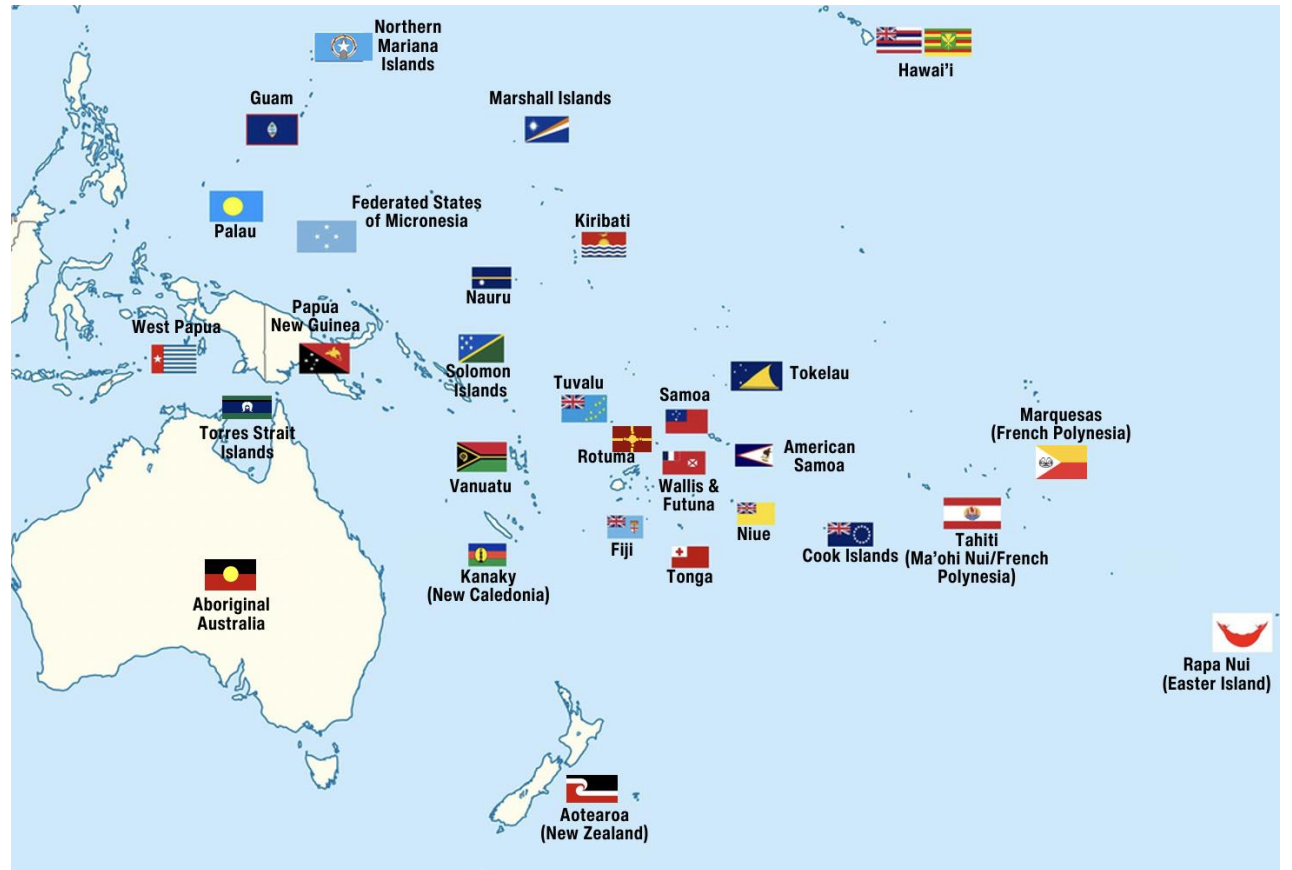
About PICA-WA

- **Statewide 501c3 nonprofit** founded in 2019 in South King County
- Our mission is to **establish a cultural home, center community power, and advocate to the further the wellness of our Pacific Islander communities** physically, culturally, socially, and spiritually.
- Work is based on a **two-pronged model**
 - Direct services
 - Systems advocacy



Where are NH/PI (Pasifika) peoples from?

Oceania consists of **three regions: Melanesia, Polynesia, and Micronesia**, all containing populations of our **Pasifika peoples** including Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamoru, Tongan, Marshallese, Chuukese, Fijian, Kosraean, Palauan, Yapese and many other Pasifika communities.



Advancing Wellness

*Our 12 Policy Priorities & the
Importance of Data in Advocacy*



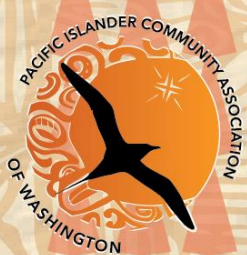
What Advancing Wellness Means at PICA-WA

Advancing Pasifika wellness in Washington state and in the U.S. diaspora means that we have to begin to resist the ways that we have accepted the unjust realities as is and instead begin to collectivize our voice, build our civic power, and usher in the world that we would like for our future descendants and our elders to live in. At PICA-WA, we believe that wellness can only be achieved through politicizing our values of love and care and fighting for laws and policies that are humane and just.



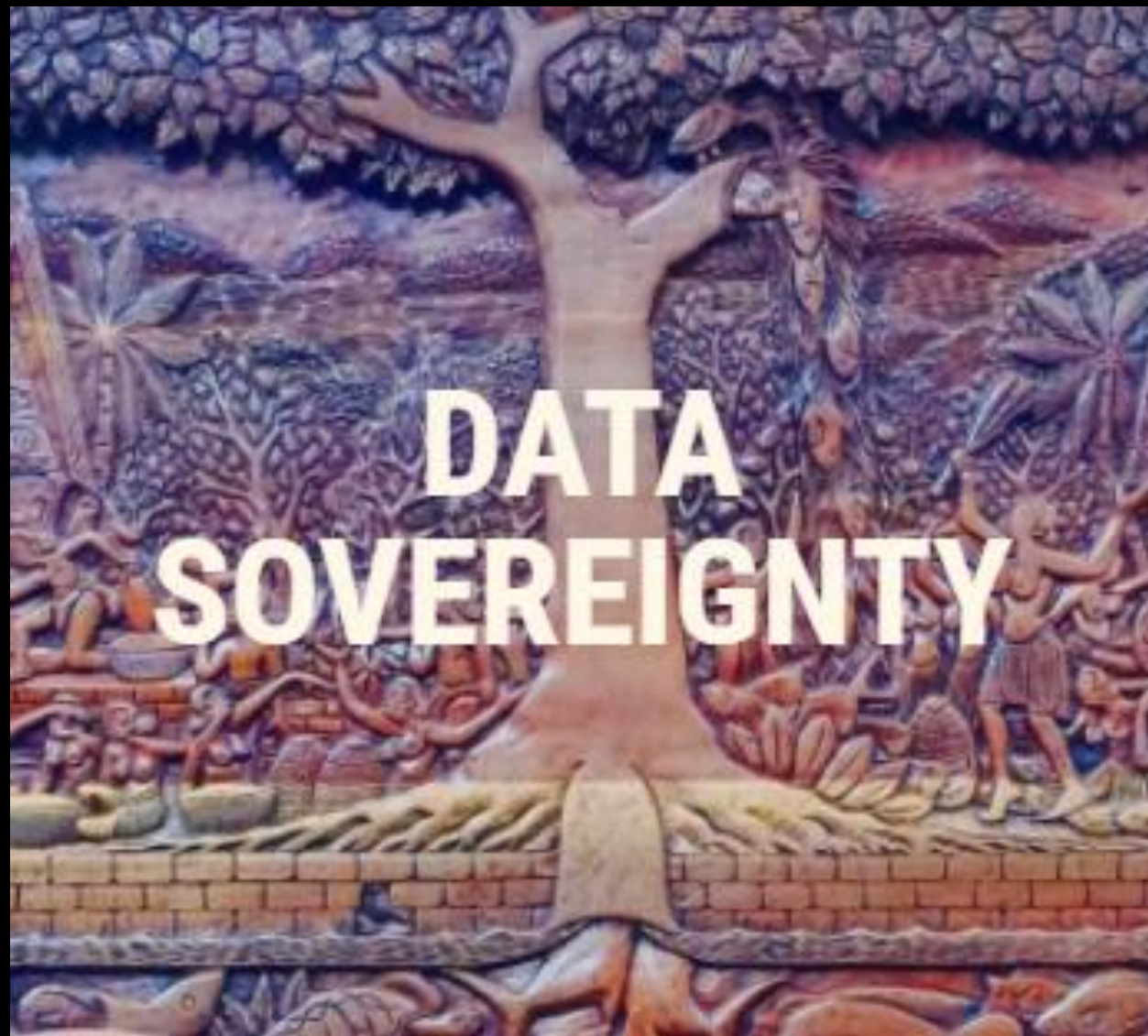
Our 12 Policy Priorities

- NH/PI Political Autonomy
- Food Sovereignty
- Housing Justice
- Immigration Justice
- Health Justice
- Justice System Reform
- Police Accountability
- Data Sovereignty
- Pasifika Liberation
- Holistic Education
- QTPI Inclusion
- Language Justice



Wellness Policy Priorities

PICA-WA is determined to fight for full data sovereignty, not just for NH/PIs, but for all overburdened communities who are overlooked in data collection methods. We are committed to decolonizing data collection.



Why data disaggregation? (Why dismantle API?)

- Historical Context: OMB 15 (1977 and 2024), National Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month (1978), etc.
- Problem: Decades worth of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander erasure, and political and financial disinvestment in community infrastructure
- How the Problem is Perpetuated:
 - Uses of terms like API, APA, AAPI, AANHPI
 - Organizations and mission statements have also been created with these same letters which promise to serve, but absorb critical equity-based funding which does not find its way back to NH/PI communities



Why data disaggregation? (Why dismantle API?)

- How the Problem is Perpetuated: (continued)
 - Internalized Racism: Model minority myth and racial inferiority
- The Solutions
 - Local, state and federal data disaggregation
 - Intentional language use
 - Community solidarity and resiliency



NH/PI Community Data Report

HOW TO BE IN SOLIDARITY WITH NH/PI FOR PARTNERS AND ALLIES

- **Discontinue the use of AAPI, API, ANHPI & APA and disaggregate.** We ask all partners and allies to stop using the terms API, AAPI, ANHPI & APA and disaggregate. Use Asian/Asian American (A/AA), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (NH/PI) or Pasifika, respectively and appropriately to talk about the issues at hand and the communities that are actually experiencing them. We ask that Asian-led and serving organizations consider rebranding names of organizations and programs to end the lumping of our respective communities.¹⁶
- **Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders should be named autonomously and not be attached to Asian/Asian Americans to honor the uniqueness of culture and location of both communities.** This should also be reflected in how data is collected and presented about NH/PI communities.¹⁷
- **Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are uniquely named with the use of the forward slash to distinguish Pacific peoples from the rest of the Pacific and Native Hawaiians who have a Trust relationship with the U.S.** We also use this term due to the OMB mandate in 1997 that designated the use of NH/PI as a unique racial category when gathering race data in the federal government.¹⁸
- **As long-time beneficiaries of funding for "API communities," it is the responsibility of Asian/Asian American-led organizations to take a firm stance and shift away from terminology, rhetoric and frameworks that group our unique communities together.¹⁹**
- **Do not perpetuate the erasure of any community, and support community-led movements and efforts that prioritize intersectionality and advance equity.**

"There is undisputed beauty in the solidarity that Asian and Pasifika communities have found and had to build during what has truly been an ambitious movement. And moving forward, may there be deep listening, learning, grace and action in disaggregation, so we may all find deeper solidarity and the inherent abundance that we hold as peoples and communities."

— From *Why we must dismantle API* by Kiana McKenna (PICA-WA) and Shomya Tripathy (ACRS)

Washington NH/PI Community Data Report 2024

- Funded by Inatai Foundation in 2022
- Partnered with KAYA Strategik and UTOPIA Washington for research support
- Four community listening sessions



Washington NH/PI Community Data Report 2024

- Uplift the critical need for more disaggregated and culturally aligned data collection and reporting
- Provide policy recommendations that are informed by community wisdom and successes
- Continue to advocate for better Pasifika health outcomes in solidarity with BIPOC, queer, and disabled intersecting communities in holding systems and institutions accountable to the communities they serve.



Shared Data Ownership and Usage

We recognize that historically, in addition to the lack of transparency and power given to marginalized communities in data collection carried out by government systems and other institutions, that data also, for centuries, has been weaponized against our communities to reinforce oppressive systems that result in disinvestment and harmful policies.



Shared Data Ownership and Usage

We are committed to data justice in Pasifika communities and therefore in the NH/PI Data Project, aim to increase visibility of our Pasifika peoples, be representative of community needs, challenges and strengths and also, use the data collected for this report in ways that will promote Pasifika self-determination. Therefore, all data collected for the purpose of the NH/PI Data Project, in addition to the report itself, are the shared property of not only PICA-WA and UTOPIA, but also our wider Pasifika community, and can be used in our shared interests to advance Pasifika wellness in any way we see fit.



Washington NH/PI Community Data Report 2024

Highlights of what we heard from community

- Due to available data (which was not initially collected by Pasifika), some Pasifika communities were not able to be highlighted in the initial data findings like communities would have preferred and are listed as 'Other'
- How do we collect data with a Pasifika framework instead of a Western one?
- Data collection has come a long way in the past couple decades – it used to be very difficult to find any data specifically for NH/PI on topics like housing, etc. Exciting that government and other systems will have NH/PI specific data that is not framed under the 'API' umbrella



Washington NH/PI Community Data Report 2024

Highlights of what we heard from community

- Data still feels inconclusive and much work needs to be done to make data collection more comprehensive and accurate
- Some of the data, even in cases when the outcomes are the worst, feel less extreme than the circumstances in which we know community members are facing every day
- Our most vulnerable community members and families will avoid data collection out of fear or from lack of capacity. They are also hardest to reach in data collection efforts.



ISLAND NATIONS WITH U.S. TERRITORY RELATIONS STATUS AND ELIGIBILITY

Island Nation	Status	Citizenship Status	U.S. Voting Eligibility	U.S. Military Eligibility
	U.S. Territory	U.S. National	Not Eligible	Eligible
rae,	COFA Territory	Independent, COFA Resident	Not Eligible	Eligible
	U.S. Territory	U.S. Citizen	Eligible, if living in U.S.	Eligible
	U.S. State (Occupied)	U.S. Citizen	Eligible	Eligible
ii	COFA Territory	Independent, COFA Resident	Not Eligible	Eligible
ds	U.S. Territory/Collective	U.S. Citizen	Eligible, if living in U.S.	Eligible
	COFA Territory	Independent, COFA Resident	Not Eligible	Eligible

PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

West Papua Campaign, USA

The Indigenous people of West Papua have long endured human rights abuses, environmental degradation, and cultural suppression. Since the 1960's, the Indonesian government has forcefully occupied and violently subdued the Indigenous people of West Papua. Under Indonesian administration, indigenous West Papuans do not have access to self-government or decision-making, freedom of expression, right to territorial or natural resources, annexation referendum, political autonomy, or governing powers over new provinces.



"If I don't stand up for my people, there is no bright future for the Indigenous people of West Papua. My people are dying every day and night, mortality rates are so high, and birth rates are very low. Silent genocide is occurring with the world largely unaware."

— Mirius Wenda (he/him), Executive Director, West Papua Campaign, USA



Over 500,000 West Papuans have been killed fighting to achieve independence since the Suharto dictatorship of Indonesia annexed West Papua in a 1969 U.N. referendum.⁴⁴



West Papua must be added to the list of foreign countries whose nationals are granted Temporary Protected Status in the U.S by the Department of Homeland Security.

About the West Papua Campaign, United States of America

The West Papua Campaign was established in Jan. 2021 and began with a focus on providing legal assistance and basic needs support to the growing population of West Papuans in the United States while bringing awareness to the unjust realities West Papuans were facing back home. Their mission is to raise awareness, advocate for rights, and promote justice for the Indigenous people of West Papua and their vision is of a West Papua where Indigenous communities are empowered, their rights are upheld, and their unique culture and environment are preserved for future generations.

For more information on the WPC-USA, please contact Mirius Wenda at mirius@picawa.org, or visit www.wpc-usa.org.

OTHER ISLAND NATIONS STATUS AND U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE

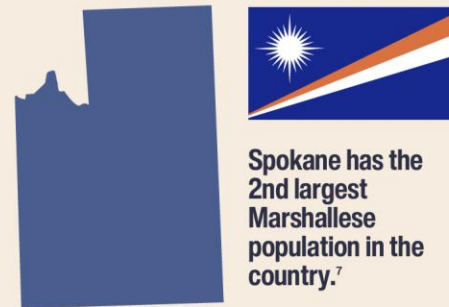
Island Nation	Status	Country of Citizenship	U.S. Military Presence*
New Zealand (Aotearoa)	Self-Governing	New Zealand, Former British Colony	Yes
Australia	Independent	Australia	Yes
Cook Islands	Self-Governing, Free Association with New Zealand	New Zealand	No
Easter Island (Rapa Nui)	Self-Governing, Free Association with New Zealand	Chile	No
Fiji	Independent, Former UK Colony	Fiji	Yes
French Polynesia (Ma'ohi Nui)	Territory/Collective	France	Yes
Kiribati	Independent, Former UK Colony	Kiribati	No
Nauru	Independent	Nauru	Yes
New Caledonia (Kanaky)	Territory	France	No
Niue	Self-Governing, Free Association with New Zealand	New Zealand	No
Papua New Guinea	Self-Governing, Commonwealth Realm, Former Australian Colony	Papua New Guinea	No
Western Samoa (Samoa)	Independent, Former NZ Colony	Samoa	Yes

* U.S. military bases on island.

POLICY HIGHLIGHT: Compacts of Free Association (COFA)

COFA is the treaty between the U.S., the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau, which allows residents of these three nations to live and work in the U.S. legally without citizenship while the U.S. gets exclusive military rights to the land and waters of each country – a maritime area larger than the United States.


Although COFA peoples pay taxes and contribute to American society and the economy, they do not have access to many of the benefits and rights that citizens do. The radioactive fallout and radiation has also left some islands uninhabitable, and many adverse health effects are still being felt today.



Spokane has the 2nd largest Marshallese population in the country.⁷

67 nuclear tests were carried out in the Marshall Islands during the Cold War from 1946 to 1958 by the U.S. military.³⁴

The detonation of these 67 fission and thermonuclear weapons are estimated to be in equivalence to 7200 Hiroshima-sized bombs.²⁷



“There is undisputed beauty in the solidarity that Asian and Pasifka communities have found and had to build during what has truly been an ambitious movement. And moving forward, may there be deep listening, learning, grace and action in disaggregation, so we may all find deeper solidarity and the inherent abundance that we hold as peoples and communities.”²

– From *Why we must dismantle API* by Kiana McKenna (PICA-WA) and Shomya Tripathy (ACRS)

Fa'afetai lava/lakwe/saina
ma'āse/malo 'aupito/thank you!

Questions?

