



Marshall Islands Newsletter 3 Submission

Due to the pandemic, the Office of Commerce, Investment, and Tourism (OCIT) had a slightly different agenda for the year 2021 compared to previous years. OCIT focused on potential investment opportunities, domestic tourism development, employee professional growth, adaptation to new COVID requirements, and a tourism recovery strategy to rebuild the Marshall Islands once RMI's borders are reopened.

The Ao Kapijuknen Project, which translates to "My Homeland," was one of the earliest tourism-related projects that OCIT co-managed. Two winners were recently chosen for seed funding to launch their entrepreneurial ventures, and we are thrilled to have two new destinations within Majuro and Arno soon. In partnership with IOM, OCIT will also offer tourism-related trainings for the project's winners and short-listed candidates. Our staff is committed to continuing to provide tourism-related trainings.

In mid-March, OCIT in collaboration with SPTO hosted The Pacific Tourism Organization's "Waste Action Initiative" 3-day workshop. The program taught 22 women and 3 men how to solder used and discarded plastic bottles into home decor and jewelry. As plastic water bottles have been identified as one of the major solid waste pollutants, this project aimed at the 3R's – i.e. Reduce Re-Use and Recycle as part of OCIT's "Keep Majuro Clean" campaign. The Trade Division of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Commerce recruited 13 participants, while the Tourism Unit recruited 12 participants, bringing in people from neighboring atolls, as well as youth, artisans, single mothers, business owners, government workers, and community leaders. During the training, participants studied various soldering techniques in order to produce objects to sell and profit from during the exhibition on the last day of the event, as well as teach others in their home atoll/community.

Also, throughout the year, OCIT's Tourism Unit hosted night markets, creating avenues for entrepreneurs and small businesses to sell and promote their products. Vendors also took the opportunity to sell their products online as we offered free internet at the venue. Our team also assisted others' night markets as they were inspired by ours. We happily support them in coordinating and supplying any necessary logistics. OCIT's Tourism Unit also provided support to tourism operators during well-known events such as the NFL Super Bowl LV. A team from OCIT visited four restaurants to observe and critique them on a whole set of criteria that we believe are key to ensuring successful delivery of activities to the public. The study focused on customer service, food and beverage quality, event packages, venue cleanliness, seating arrangements, and entertainment (quality of video & audio). All businesses received the feedback and plan to use them to improve their services.

One particular event our tourism team participated in was the Scholarship and Career fair hosted by College of the Marshall Islands. Our team set up a booth to not only advertise and educate the public about our organization, but also to discuss RMI's tourism sector or industry and the necessity of tourism for small developing countries like the Marshall Islands. One of our efforts mentioned above is the "Keep Majuro Clean" campaign which is an initiative designed to encourage the public to keep Majuro clean as our country's capital. From our participation at the

college fair, our team was able to recruit students, volunteers and related government stakeholders to partake in public clean ups. The next cleaning event OCIT will host will be on December 4, 2021 which is World Volunteers Day.

While educating the public and raising awareness about tourism, OCIT also invests in the professional development of its employees. Among the trainings were the following:

- New Project Gender Discrimination Project Launch and Inception Workshop
- Risk Communications Workshop
- Mental Health Training
- UNWTO hybrid Workshop on Sustainable Tourism Product Development in the Pacific Islands
- Service Excellence Training
- Destination Marketing & Inbound Travel

Towards the end of the year, the tourism team has the following events to partake in:

- Pacific Tourism Organization's Tourism Research Symposium
- Christmas Night Market
- Christmas Residential Light Contest
- Christmas Lighting Ceremony
- 2022 New Year's Eve Block Party

The team will follow the tentative calendar of events below for the Fiscal Year 2022. We are excited to announce that the Miss Marshall Islands pageant will be held in the Summer of 2022 to select the new Miss Marshall Islands for the years 2022-2024. Our team also submitted the Marshall Islands' proposal for the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration's State Tourism Grant under the American Rescue Plan Act. If we are successful, we will add more program initiatives to our agenda for this Fiscal Year and next.



OCIT FY2021-22 Calendar of Events & Holidays

1. Gospel Day/Kamolol Day.....December 4, 2021
2. Majuro Night Market.....December 12, 2021
3. Chamber Christmas Parade.....December 12, 2021
4. Capitol Building Christmas Lights.....December 18, 2021
5. Christmas Day.....December 25, 2021
6. New Year's Eve Block Party.....December 31, 2021
7. New Year's Day.....January 1, 2022
8. NFL Superbowl.....February 8, 2022
9. Kwajalein Memorial Day.....February 9, 2022
10. Valentine's Day.....February 14, 2022
11. Nuclear Remembrance Day.....March 1, 2022
12. International Women's Day of Prayer.....March 8, 2022
13. Pacific Tourism Waste Action Initiative Virtual Training...March 23-25, 2022
14. Soft Launch of "Keep Majuro Clean" Campaign.....March 25, 2022
15. Majuro Day.....March 26, 2022
16. Good Friday.....April 2, 2022
17. Easter Sunday.....April 4, 2022
18. MIMA Conference.....April 19-23, 2022
19. Earth Day.....April 22, 2022
20. MIMA 21st Executive Leadership Conference.....April 27-May 4, 2022
21. Constitution Day.....April 30, 2022
22. World Tuna Day.....May 8, 2022
23. Arkansas May Day.....May 29, 2022
24. World Ocean Day.....June 8, 2022
25. Summer Night Market.....June 30, 2022
26. Marshall Islands Fishermen's Day.....July 2-3, 2022
 - a. "Taste of the Marshall Islands" focus on seafood
27. Likiep Atoll 3rd Annual Fishing Tournament & Expedition..July 23-24, 2022
28. SADORI Showcasing and Rearlaplap, Arno Market...August 6, 2022
29. Marshall Islands Resort's Mini-Market.....August 13, 2022
30. RiJermal Day.....September 3, 2022
31. Micronesia Clean-up Day.....September 13, 2022
32. Manit Day/Lutok Koban Alele.....September 24, 2022
33. All-Mic Fishing Tournament.....September 24 & 25, 2022
 - a. "Taste of the Marshall Islands" focus on seafood
34. World Tourism Day..... September 27, 2022

Updated: March 18, 2022

*Still being planned

