



Western Pacific Maritime Academy

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION ADA VISITS KAGMAN H.S. MARITIME PROGRAM

Western Pacific Maritime Academy (WPMA) is pleased to announce Commissioner Doctor Alfred Ada made a surprise visit to Kagman High School (KHS) to observe the maritime studies program. WPMA is offering its US Coast Guard approved Basic Training Personal Survival Techniques (BT-PST) course to Kagman H.S. students in a pilot program. BT-PST is one of five basic training courses that qualify candidates to work as professional mariners on large merchant marine ships similar to those anchored off the pristine beaches off Saipan. Captain Dave Johansen is teaching the BT-PST course.

The BT-PST is a 14-hour course that teaches students the foundational knowledge and skills on how to survive disaster at sea through both written exam and practical exercises. Knowledge includes shipboard emergency response, types of shipboard emergencies, principles of survival at sea, understanding survival craft and equipment and techniques for abandoning ship. Practical exercises are conducted to prove skills in donning a life jacket, cold weather immersion suits, treading water, turning their clothing into flotation devices and boarding a life raft.

To date 7 maritime students who are known as “midshipmen” have received their Merchant Marine Credential (MMC). During Commissioner Ada’s visit, Midshipman Kenshiro Yanai presented his MMC with much pride. WPMA is running pilot programs to a total of 24 midshipmen both at KHS and DA’OK Academy. By the 2023 2024 school year, WPMA expects to be expanding to all high schools on the CNMI including Tinian and Rota.

WPMA’s PSS maritime workforce development program steers candidates into high paying jobs in the maritime sector as entry level credentialed professional mariners as deck seamen, engineers or members of the catering department. An entry level seaman in the US Merchant Marine can earn upwards of \$5000 - \$7000 per month through one of a number of Maritime Unions or Military Sealift Command. In the wake of COVID-19, the maritime sector is experiencing a huge demand for credentialed mariners.

WPMA is a Non-Profit Corporation located right here on Saipan with its maritime offices and classrooms located at Northern Marianas Technical Institute (NMTech) in lower base. The Academy will be offering a full suite of USCG approved maritime courses and services to the seafaring public.

For further information about the PSS programs, contact your principal and raise at your PTSA meetings. For additional information about our programs to the general public, or information on how to apply for an MMC, please contact Selina Taitano at staitano@wpma.net

“SEAFARING IS NOBLE WORK”