



Guam ACTE

careers through education

Guam Industries and Career & Technical Education: A Community Discourse

Teachers' Professional Development

February 21, 2026
GCA Trades Academy
Tiyan, Guam

Welcome Message

Håfa Adai and welcome to the **Teachers' Professional Development Segment of the 3rd Annual Guam Association for Career & Technical Education (Guam ACTE) Summit**.

This professional development experience was intentionally designed for Guam's educators—middle school, high school, and postsecondary educators—who play a critical role in preparing students for college, careers, and an evolving workforce. The sessions featured in this booklet focus on strengthening instructional practice, deepening industry and workforce awareness, and equipping teachers with practical strategies that can be immediately applied in the classroom.

The **professional development strands** highlight key areas impacting education today, including workforce development, cybersecurity awareness, digital safety, emerging technologies, and industry-informed teaching practices. Our presenters bring both educational and industry perspectives, offering insights that bridge classroom instruction with real-world expectations and career pathways.

We encourage you to engage actively in the sessions, reflect on how the ideas shared connect to your own teaching context, and collaborate with colleagues across disciplines and grade levels. Your participation in professional learning strengthens not only individual practice, but the collective capacity of Guam's education community.

Thank you for your commitment to continuous growth and excellence in teaching. We hope this professional development experience is both meaningful and impactful.

Si Yu'os Ma'åse',

Charlie Hermosa
Chair, 2026 Guam ACTE Summit

Marivic C. Schrage, M.Ed. CTE
Co-Chair, 2026 Guam ACTE Summit

Professional Development Schedule at a Glance

Teachers' Professional Development | Guam ACTE Summit 2026

Schedule Overview

7:30 - 8:00 AM Registration

8:00 -9:00 AM Morning Plenary Session (All Participants) (Rooms 201 and 202)

9:00 - 1:00 PM Concurrent Professional Development Workshops

Concurrent Workshop Schedule

TIME	STRAND 1 — AI for Teaching, Learning, and Workforce Readiness	STRAND 2 — Cybersecurity Awareness & Digital Safety for Educators	STRAND 3 — Innovations in Manufacturing, Skilled Trades, Maritime, and Industry 4.0	STRAND 4 — High-Impact Pedagogy for Future-Ready CTE Programs in the Islands	NETWORKING Room
	Room 203	Room 204	Room 205	Room 206	Room 201
9:15-10:00	Classroom to Career: Ways to Prepare Students for An AI-Driven Workforce (Marissa Eusebio Borja)	Cyber Hygiene as a Life Skill: Teaching Digital Resilience in the Classroom and Paving Pathways to Careers in Technology. (Dr. Jonathan Liwag)	:Futures: Architecture As A STEM-STEAM & Workforce Pathway for Guam (Arch. Renato O Martinez)	Construction Craft Training on Guam: A case study Bert Johnston, DBA	Open Networking
10-15-11:00	Bridging the Gap: Workforce Development on Guam (2026) (Jeffrey Vitkovitsky)	Emerging Cyber Threats in Guam and Marianas (Plamin Rabino)	Crying for Maritime Labor and the Barrier to Entry Level Mariners (Capt. Michael Bacher)	From Planning to Practice: A Hands-on Project-Based Learning Design Workshop (M. Vicky Schrage & Christine Fernandez)	
11:15-12:00	21st Century Skills for Exponential Generation (Ricson Singson Que)	Safe by Design: Integrating Data Privacy in the	Foundations of Possibility: Building Futures in Construction (Crystal Cruz)		

		Modern Classroom (Thomas Petra)			
12:15-1:00	Incorporating Financial Literacy The Easy way (Eric Chong)	Hands-on skills for managing toxic combinations: A global overview. (Dr. James Stanger)	What Advanced Manufacturing Looks Like Today (Alex C. Benham)	Career Readiness Begins in Early Childhood (Dr. M Postrozny & Missy Palomo)	

Participant Notes

- Participants may move freely between strands.
- Session details and descriptions are available on individual presenter pages.
- The Networking Room is available throughout the morning for informal discussion and professional connection.

**STRAND 1 — AI for Teaching, Learning, and Workforce
Readiness**

**Marissa Eusebio Borja**

Founder

Pacific AI Media & Communications Organization

A former KUAM anchor/reporter and TV Host of Pacific Home & Garden - Marissa Eusebio Borja is now the Founder of Pacific AI, Media and Communications. With a postgraduate diploma in AI from the University of Oxford her work as a social entrepreneur is focused on advancing ethical, inclusive, and locally grounded AI adoption. Based in Guam, Pacific AI helps communities prepare for an AI-driven future.

Session Title: Classroom to Career: Ways to Prepare Students for an AI-Driven Workforce**Description**

AI is rapidly changing how work is performed across industries, including skilled trades and technical fields. The session will explore how educators can align instruction with emerging workforce expectations influenced by AI. Participants will learn how to integrate AI literacy, problem-solving, and ethical awareness into CTE and academic pathways.



Jeffrey Vitkovitsky CPCT, CDER
CEO-Allied Human Resources Inc.
dba Allied HR

Jeffrey Vitkovitsky, CPCT, CDER, is the COO of Allied Human Resources and a 20-year business owner. Since 2010, he has scaled staffing solutions across diverse sectors, including government and construction and partnered with several Private Sector and Government organizations in workforce development programs. A certified drug testing expert, Jeffrey helps companies manage safety programs to ensure secure, compliant working environments as well.

Session Title Bridging the Gap: Workforce Development in Guam (2026)

Description

This session examines the workforce landscape and practical strategies to develop, retain, and upskill talent across generations. Participants will explore earn-while-you-learn models, apprenticeships, fast-track credentials, AI upskilling, and employer resources that shift workforce thinking from filling jobs to building sustainable career pathways.

**Ricson Singson Que**

President and CEO

SQrity

Ricson Singson Que is a digital champion passionate about building secure cyber futures. He transforms organizations by developing robust and secure systems, a journey that began from his early days as a programmer. His dedication to making cybersecurity more welcoming was recognized with a major 2024 Inclusion Impact Award for Asia-Pacific. Beyond the boardroom, he inspires the next generation as a professor and digital strategist for the De La Salle community. Leading his own firm, he helps businesses in their technology and digital journey toward a sustainable and resilient future.

Session Title: 21st Century Skills For The Exponential Generation**Description:**

We are the first generation in history tasked with building the future while the very ground of our society, which is technology and work, shifts exponentially beneath our feet.

The question is no longer what we need to learn, but how we need to learn and adapt. Today, we explore the essential skills for the Exponential Generation that will allow us to thrive in a world of constant disruption. Join me in this session to see what we face and how to draw our future together.

**Eric Chong**

Professor, Hospitality and Tourism
Guam Community College

Eric Chong has over thirty years of teaching career and technical education. He has taught both secondary and postsecondary levels. His passion is to provide his students with positive attitudes, skills, and knowledge for the world of work. He is a Professor of Hospitality and Tourism at the Guam Community College.

Session Title: Incorporating Financial Literacy The Easy Way**Description**

A financial literacy course is a high school graduation requirement in over 30 states. Guam does not have this requirement. However, financial literacy is an important life skill for our students. My goal is for students to be knowledgeable about managing their finances. I partnered with Everfi to accomplish this goal. Everfi has a free online financial literacy program. Upon successful completion, students acquire a certification in financial literacy, which helps them build their career portfolios and resumes. I will share about how I have implemented and incorporated this program since 2022 so that every high school graduate of my hospitality program has a level of competency in financial literacy.

**STRAND 2 — Cybersecurity Awareness & Digital Safety
for Educators**



Dr. Jonathan Liwag

College and CTE Instructor

Dr. Jonathan Liwag is a seasoned professional with 30 years of experience across business, education, information technology, and cybersecurity. As a dedicated college and CTE instructor, Dr. Liwag focuses on aligning educational programs with the workforce needs of the Marianas to equip the next generation of technology professionals.

Session Title: Cyber Hygiene as a Life Skill: Teaching Digital Resilience in the Classroom and Paving Pathways to Careers in Technology.

Description

We will explore how teaching cyber hygiene as a foundational discipline prepares students for the rigors of the modern workforce. This presentation equips teachers with simple, effective methods to cultivate cyber resilience in students, from elementary to higher education. Discover how fostering these habits not only protects our island community but also pipelines local talent into the Marianas' expanding technology sector. Educators will leave with actionable strategies to teach digital resilience and inspire students for careers in technology.



Plamin Rabino, CISSP, GICSP, SecurityX, CMMC RPA

IT/OT Cybersecurity Operations Manager
Marianas Information Technology Services

Plamin Rabino has more than 20 years' experience in cybersecurity and IT/OT infrastructure in the INDOPACOM Region. He led and trained approximately 600+ cyber defenders to protect mission critical systems and networks. He taught cybersecurity programs with the University of Maryland and Central Texas College to develop local talent in the INDOPACOM region. He currently has a Master Degree in Computer Science and is certified in CISSP, SecurityX, and GICSP.

Session Topic: Emerging Cyber Threats in Guam and Marianas

Description:

The emergence of AI, Quantum Computing and Cryptocurrency provided malicious actors the tools to scale their cyber attacks within the region. Guam and Marianas must be aware of these threats to further protect themselves in the cyber space. Learn these threats and how to defend from them.

**Thomas Petra**

Technology Director
St. John's School

Thomas Petra, M.Ed., is an educator with 35 years of experience. He has spent the past decade driving digital transformation at St. John's School as the Director of Technology. A recognized leader in educational tech, Thomas was named a Google Certified Innovator (2011) and a PBS Digital Innovator (2015).

Session Title: Safe by Design: Integrating Data Privacy in the Modern Classroom**Description**

In an era of increasing digital threats, data privacy is a shared responsibility that extends beyond the IT department. This session introduces a practical framework—built on compliance, management, and culture—to help schools maintain a secure digital environment. Participants will discover essential steps for protecting student data in their school and managing their own professional accounts.

**James Stanger, PhD**

Chief Technology Evangelist, CompTIA
President, C3

Dr. James Stanger has consulted with corporations, governments, and academic institutions about cybersecurity, systems integration, data analytics, emerging technologies, and upskilling programs for over 30 years. Organizations include AstraZeneca, HSBC, the University of Cambridge, Standard Chartered Bank Singapore, Elasticsearch, ING, Nestle, Northrop Grumman, the UK Houses of Parliament, the Japan Ministry of Defense, the United States Department of War, NCSC Thailand, and the Australian Signal Directorate. James is currently CompTIA's Chief Technology Evangelist.

Session Title: Hands-on skills for managing toxic combinations: A global overview**Description**

Join CompTIA's Dr. James Stanger as he demonstrates practical ways to teach the unique skills combinations that today's hiring managers value the most. Together, we'll delve into critical automation and AI-augmented skills that help technologists secure today's post-modern attack surface. James will leverage AI tools to accelerate attack identification and improve incident response. During this demonstration, he will emphasize how the most progressive organizations are starting to re-define traditional workflow pipelines, rather than simply reacting to cybersecurity symptoms. So, get ready to analyze some packets, and delve into how to make traditional pen testing and analytics workflows more efficient.

**STRAND 3 — Innovations in Manufacturing, Skilled
Trades, Maritime, and Industry 4.0**



Michael W. Bacher

Executive Director

Western Pacific Maritime Academy

Captain Bacher is a retired US Navy Captain and US Merchant Marine Master Mariner. He is the founder and Executive Director of Western Pacific Maritime Academy (WPMA) located on Saipan and Guam and actively expanding to Hawaii, COFA States and beyond. Michael has a rich background in maritime CTE training and applies that experience to WPMA in order to “Train the Next Generation of Mariners”. WPMA prioritizes placing its graduates in the maritime workforce, locally, nationally and internationally. Given a projection of the US losing 50% of its maritime workforce over the next 5 years, WPMA intends to answer the need through use of a training vessel to deliver mariners with ratings at the level where they are needed.

Session Title: Crying for Maritime Labor and the Barrier to Entry Level Mariners

Description

The average age of the U.S. maritime workforce is 46 to 51, based on statistics from the Military Sealift Command (MSC), the Maritime Administration (MARAD), and maritime unions. Recent projections indicate that up to 50% of U.S. mariners may exit the workforce within the next five years. Despite critical shortages at the unlicensed level—particularly among higher deck and engine ratings—significant barriers to entry persist for new mariners. Why is this?



Renato O Martinez, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP BD+C.

Senior Architect

Henningson, Durham Richardson Architecture & Engineering

“Tato”, as he is widely known, is a licensed architect in the State of New York, Guam, and the Philippines, with over 40 years of architectural design, construction and project management experience, focusing on sustainability and site-specific adaptation. He is a licensing advisor with the National Council or Architecture Registration Board (NCARB) advising emerging professionals in their path toward licensure, and a two-term president of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Marianas where he spearheaded the Continuing Education (CE) program for licensed architects on Guam.

Session Title: :Futures: Architecture as a STEM–STEAM & Workforce Pathway for Guam

Description

This professional development session introduces educators to architecture as a powerful STEM–STEAM and workforce pathway for Guam’s students. Participants explore real-world, island-relevant design challenges that naturally support project-based learning. The session highlights how math, science, technology, sustainability, and cultural context intersect through architectural thinking. Educators leave with practical tools and classroom-ready strategies to integrate design-based learning into their instruction.

**Crystal Cruz**

Engineer,
Contractor: Construction Manager

Crystal is a construction manager with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering and a diverse background across the construction industry. She has served as a project engineer and quality control engineer for major contractors, a reinforced concrete special inspector, and a concrete field testing technician for third-party agencies. Her career later expanded into construction management for the federal government, leading to her current role as a construction manager for a federal contractor. She advocates for early career exposure, real-world learning, and elevating underrepresented pathways in construction.

Session Title: Foundations of Possibility: Building Futures in Construction**Description**

Crystal shares her journey from an undecided single mother in college to finding purpose in the construction industry after returning to Guam and joining NAWIC. Through her story, she highlights the impact of early exposure, real-world learning, and visibility into underrepresented career paths. This presentation offers insights into how teamwork, creativity, and soft-skill development shape success in construction and encourages educators to help students connect academic learning to meaningful industry opportunities.

**Alex C. Behnam**

Director and General Manager, GAMMA
APPLIED SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA

Alex Benham is Director & GM of the Guam Additive Materials & Manufacturing Accelerator (GAMMA), an ASTRO America initiative building on-island advanced manufacturing capability in the Indo-Pacific. Based in Guam, he leads the execution of metal additive manufacturing, process development, quality systems, and facility operations in a resource-constrained, high-consequence environment. In parallel with production and evaluation, GAMMA supports workforce development by exposing students and educators to the mechanical engineering discipline with a focus on how modern manufacturing actually operates, from design and fabrication to inspection and documentation.

Session Title: What Advanced Manufacturing Looks Like Today — and the Skills It Demands**Description**

Guam stands at a pivotal moment in developing advanced manufacturing capability. This session explores the operations of modern production environments, and how additive manufacturing, robotic systems, quality control, and digital workflows are being implemented locally to support real operational needs. Participants will gain insight into the skills, credentials, and competencies required for success in this evolving field. The discussion will connect industry realities with education pathways, helping educators better understand how to prepare students for emerging careers in manufacturing and skilled trades.

**STRAND 4 —High-Impact Pedagogy for Future-Ready
CTE Programs in the Islands**



Bert Johnston, DBA

Education Director
GCA Trades Academy, Inc.

Dr. Johnston is the Education Director of the GCA Trades Academy, a non-profit, non-government education institution established to provide construction-related craft training. Dr. Johnston is an NCCER Master Trainer and Assessment Administrator. He holds a bachelor's degree in education, a master's degree in public administration, and a doctoral degree in business administration. His prior work experience includes General Manager of Guam Waterworks Authority, Corporate Personnel Manager of MV Pangelinan Enterprises, Assistant Manager of Dobbins Jewelry, and American Red Cross Water Safety Instructor Trainer. He is married to Ramona San Nicolas and they reside in Talofofu,

Session Title: Construction Craft Training on Guam: A case study

Session Description

The GCA Trades Academy turns twenty this year. Over the past two decades, there have been many lessons learned in taking prior unmet objectives, redefining educational priorities, pioneering different conventions, and delivering a process that works for our island community and construction industry.



Marivic Schrage, M.Ed. CTE

Associate Professor, Bachelor of Science in CTE (BSCTE)
Guam Community College

Christine Fernandez, GCC HTMP Teacher - THS

Senior, Bachelor of Science in CTE

Marivic “Vicky” Schrage teaches CTE pedagogy and leadership at Guam Community College and is pursuing a PhD in Workforce and Organizational Development with an emphasis in Career and Technical Education at Old Dominion University, an R1 research institution. Her mentee, Christine Fernandez, will share a reflection and lessons learned on implementing PBL in her classroom for the first time last spring.

Session Title: From Planning to Practice: A Hands-on Project-Based Learning Design Workshop

Description

This 90-minute hands-on workshop guides participants through planning an effective Project-Based Learning (PBL) experience. The session includes a brief reflection from BSCTE student and GCC hospitality instructor at Tiyan High School, **Christine Fernandez**, who will share lessons learned from implementing PBL in her classroom.



Dr. Marsha Postrozny,
Professor, Education, Guam Community College

Ms. Melissa Palomo
Chair, Education Department, Guam Community College

Dr. Marsha Postrozny-Torres, Ed.D., is a full-time faculty member and former Department Chair in the Education Department at Guam Community College, with over 30 years of experience in early childhood education. She teaches multiple ECE courses, advises students, and actively supports workforce development across Guam's early learning sector.

Melissa Palomo is the current Education Department Chair and former full-time faculty member for GCC's CTE Early Childhood Education secondary program. A committed leader at Guam Community College, she supports student success and advances Guam's early childhood education and workforce initiatives.

Session Title: Career Readiness Begins in Early Childhood

Description

When people think of career readiness and preparation for the workforce, early childhood is not usually the first stage that comes to mind. This session is designed for early childhood educators and explores how career readiness truly begins in early childhood — through play, problem-solving, and intentional learning experiences.

Acknowledgement

Special thanks to our presenters, facilitators, industry partners, GCA Trades Academy, and all educators who contributed to making this professional development experience meaningful and impactful.

We also extend our sincere appreciation to our island educators for being part of the Guam ACTE Professional Development experience. The conversations, hands-on learning, and shared expertise shared during this summit reflect our collective commitment to strengthening Career and Technical Education on Guam. We encourage you to take what you've learned today and apply it in your classrooms, programs, and partnerships.