



ASHENAFI LOM FOUNDATION

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS FOR GUAM'S YOUTH

Dear Friend,

I'm writing to **thank you for your support of the Ashenafi Lom Foundation** this past year. This letter is not a solicitation. My purpose is to let you know what we have been up to, and how your funds have been used to benefit Guam's youth in suicide prevention efforts. During 2023, the Foundation sponsored the following events and initiatives:

- **Dash for Ash 5 K on January 28, 2023.** We had over 400 participants join us at Ypao Beach for an early morning memorial and run. There were dozens of volunteers, with students and teachers from Harvest Christian Academy, ExpressCare, Triple J, and many others. Over \$4200 was raised, with \$2100 subsequently donated to Harvest House (Guam's foster children). You may have continued to see "Dasher" T-shirts popping up around Guam, with a positive message on them!

- **Reckoning with the Primal Wound film showing**, on May 11, 2023. Partnering with I'Pinangon Campus Suicide Prevention at University of Guam, we featured this poignant movie about the adoptee experience, including their risks for suicide. The Q&A with the film's director and many local participants brought awareness to the ACE trauma score and its impact on youth mental health.

-The Foundation offered **free office space for psychologist** Dr. Betty Frain at ExpressCare. From May until December, she provided counseling to vulnerable Guam youth and families. She recently retired due to health reasons. The Foundation is seeking a new therapist to sponsor.

- We **Painted a bus stop with "Be Kind to Your Mind"** with the help of Harvest teen volunteers.

-Partnering with the Discovery Learning Center, we **sponsored a Youth Dodgeball tournament** for middle schoolers in July 2023. Participants were given Tshirts and mental health awareness resources. Talking about mental health needs to start in childhood!

- In Ashenafi's memory, we provided a \$500 **college scholarship** through the Guam Football Association and the Wings Soccer club. We will continue to offer that in 2024.

-We donated **\$5000 to the Out of the Darkness Walk**, for Guam's suicide survivors in September, allowing the event to be free of charge for all participants. The Walk allows those impacted by suicide to grieve together, share memories of their loved ones and gain mutual support.

-Finally, we partnered with **Junior Achievement group LaLa to create a mental health journal for Guam teens.** This beautiful project was entirely managed by the kids, resulting in an illustrated, 105-page notebook for thoughts and reflections.

We are currently planning our events for 2024, and welcome your ideas and collaboration!

Gratefully yours,

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