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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – May 14, 2025

Guam Psychology Internship Consortium Receives National Accreditation

Tamuning, Guam – The Guam Psychology Internship Program has achieved accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association (APA). The aim of the internship program is to prepare, train, and retain psychologists to provide culturally competent collaborative health care for the underserved and diverse people of Guam. It is a partnership led by the Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center (GBHWC), supported by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).

The Guam Psychology Internship Consortium (Guam-PIC) provides hands-on training in health services psychology tailored to the unique challenges of health care services in remote/island setting. Guam-PIC was open for applications in 2022, and had its first graduating class in 2023. It offers two positions each year to doctoral-level students, who are deemed internship-ready by their clinical, counseling, or school psychology doctoral programs. Interns have experiential training opportunities across settings, including throughout Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center (the primary sponsoring institution, that pays the interns' stipend), Department of Corrections, and Department of Youth Affairs.

"By meeting the rigorous standards of the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association, Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness Center strengthens our ability to serve the people of Guam with evidence-based care, professional excellence, and accessibility—ensuring that individuals and families receive the support they need, especially in a time when mental health has never been more crucial. With this accreditation, we are better equipped than ever to serve our people with compassion, innovation, and integrity, strengthening the well-being of our entire community." said Governor Lou Leon Guerrero.

"The Guam- PIC began with leadership having the vision to believe building Guam's mental health professional workforce requires investment at home to build professional training opportunities," said Dennis Mohatt, Vice President for Behavioral Health for WICHE. "By training in Guam, we ensure students learn how best to serve the diverse people of Guam through a hands-on experience."

"This accreditation would not have been possible without the unwavering commitment of our staff, whose expertise and compassion make a difference in the lives of those we serve every day," said GBHWC Director, Carissa Pangelinan. Building the internship has been a labor of many hands and voices including GBHWC Psychologists Dr. Mary Fegurgur and Dr. Angela Laygo; and the WICHE team including Dennis Mohatt, Dr. Ericia Leeper, Dr. Neal Bowen, and Vanessa Roup. The APA Accreditation decision is retroactive to the date of the Board Action in April 2025, allowing the current cohort of two interns to graduate from an accredited internship program in August 2025.

For more information regarding the APA Accreditation or the Guam-PIC, visit ww.guam-pic.org or gbhwc.guam.gov.