

PIEAMM

PACIFIC ISLAND ETHNIC ART MUSEUM

July 2011 Newsletter

Welcome Interns

Joining us this summer, is Steven Sasa Marsiglia, a sophomore at University of California, Berkeley, majoring in Anthropology & Conservation Resource Studies and Jen Thunyakij, a senior at California State University Long Beach, majoring in Anthropology. Interns are increasing their knowledge of Pacific Islands, learning cataloging, assisting in community outreach events, assisting in the research and assisting in exhibit materials budget.



"I feel very honored to work at this museum, because I feel that the different cultures from the Pacific are slowly being forgotten as the newer and younger generations come in. It is a pleasure to be apart of the preservation of these cultures by interning at the museum, because I feel that the work that I do contributes to the continuity of our histories and traditions." – Steven Marsiglia

Looking In

Editor's Note: We asked our intern Jen Thunyakij to begin writing a column to share her experiences with our patrons.

Fifty second grade students from Tincher Preparatory came into the museum for a field trip. To be honest, I was nervous. The mere sight of them hopping off the bus was intimidating. Fifty kids, a clear difference from the expected number of sixty, but fifty kids! This was a daunting task, especially since this was my first experience with the elementary



school tour. We were able to divide the group into two, making it a little easier to breathe. We started outside, in the museum's sculpture garden, which by itself is worth the visit, telling the kids about the *Latte* stone, stone money, and *Tino* figures. The kids had a definite interest in the garden and the landscaping, and were completely fascinated with the stone money.

Upon entering the museum, the children were in awe of all we had on display. The kids gasped with delight and wonderment at the sight of the community house and the wall of *Tapwanu* masks, as do many of our grown-up visitors. Auntie Fran, who was conducting the tour, told them marvelous folk stories in correspondence with our story boards, which they listened to with the utmost attention. Although working with the kids was a lot of work, it was very fulfilling, being able to teach them about the Pacific islands' cultures, and to open their young, impressionable minds to the beauty of the world. – Jen Thunyakj, Senior, California State University Long Beach, Anthropology

Internship Openings

We are now accepting applications for Fall Semester Interns. Please send your letter of interest and resume to the Brenna Barrett, Museum Director at bbarrett@pieam.org.

About the Art

If you've visited PIEAM, then surely you must have seen our great wall of the hauntingly beautiful *Tapwanu* masks. You can't miss it; it's the very first thing that greets you as you walk through our doors and truly welcomes you to the spirits of the Pacific Islands. The black-and-white masks hail from the Mortlock Islands of the Micronesian state, Chuuk. These masks are special and sacred; after all, *tapwanu* means "sacred spirit," and they display a combination of human and bird features. On our wall, there are two size differences, mainly because these masks were worn and therefore sized to the person's stature and use. When you look at them, you will definitely be able to tell which falls into which grouping. The large masks were worn in ceremonial dances, while the small masks were hung outside the home, both of which ward off destructive typhoons and protect the island's crops. The masks are carved out of the wood of the breadfruit, much like many of the artifacts found in the museum, and are painted with natural pigments.



If you follow us on social media, you will have a chance to interact on your experiences with these pieces or learn from others knowledge as well.

FACES OF CEREMONY Community Exhibit

Opening Soon

Why and how we paint ourselves: has it changed over the years? Were we decorating ourselves to be in harmony with nature, for ritual, to make a statement, to fit in, to defy, to make a political statement or just to look different? *Faces of Ceremony* explores why people of the Pacific Islands paint themselves. Exhibit Opens to the Public: September 16, 2011

PIEAM OUT AND ABOUT

July 9, Downtown Long Beach Art Walk, Linden Ave & Broadway, 4 pm – 10 pm. Free. Stop by our information table and sign-up to be eligible to win an individual membership.

July 27, Multi-Cultural Diversity event at VA Long Beach, Pantages outdoor patio, 10 am – 2 pm. Event not open to the public.

Continuing Announcements

I-405 Freeway Closure July 15-18: Plan Ahead

- **Northbound I-405:** 10-mile closure between I-10 and U.S. 101
- **Southbound I-405:** 4-mile closure between U.S. 101 and Getty Center Drive Ramps

As part of the lane widening project, on July 16 – 17, and from as early as 7:00pm on July 15 for some ramps, the 405 will be closing. All ramps will be closed by midnight and they won't reopen until 5:00am on July 18.

Museum Closures

- **Saturday, July 22 at 3 pm**
- **Wednesday, August 3, All Day**

**These are private parties and we will not be able to allow the public entry to the premises.*

Docent Training Program Offered this Fall

If you have a passion for learning and sharing, a love for Pacific Island arts and culture, then you can help by becoming a PIEAM docent. The docent program is a 6-week training program and meets once a week. Call PIEAM today at (562) 216-4170 or email info@pieam.org and find out how you can get involved.

Group Tours

Looking for something to do with the kids while they are out on summer break? Take them to PIEAM! Discounted group tours are available for groups with 10 or more people. All group tours include a hands-on Cultural Trunk where you can try on a traditional grass skirt, wear a mask, touch a *Liyoos* statue, smell coconut oil and much more. [Click here](#) to inquire for details or call (562) 216-4170.

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