



NEWSLETTER

"TOGETHER, WE CAN BUILD A FUTURE"

MAY 2025

A Journey of Hope: *Connie C. Atalig's Story*

Meet Connie C. Atalig — a woman whose story reminds us that new beginnings are always possible when hope and opportunity come together.

For many years, Connie lived with a physical disability that made it difficult to move around and enjoy even the simple things in life. It wasn't just her mobility that was affected; it took a toll on her confidence too. "I stayed home most of the time," Connie shared. "I didn't think there was much more out there for me."

That changed when Connie learned about the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and the services available for people with disabilities who want to work. She reached out — and what she found was a team of caring, compassionate counselors who believed in her and her potential.

With their support, Connie received work experience training, on-the-job training, assistive technology, transportation assistance, and other essential services like police clearance, drug testing, and work apparel. Little by little, she gained back her confidence and independence.

In September 2012, Connie was hired as a full-time Administrative Assistant with the Department of Public Works — a role she held with pride and dedication for over a decade.

In December 2024, Connie happily retired from public service. These days, she enjoys spending time socializing with her peers at the Office on Aging, staying connected with her community and making the most of her well-earned retirement.

Her story reminds us all that with kindness, opportunity, and courage, lives can change in beautiful ways.

We wish Connie all the best as she continues to embrace this new chapter. ***Congratulations, Connie — and thank you for inspiring us!***



Connie happily poses with her Certificate of Appreciation honoring her committed and loyal public service to DPW.

Connie's story is a wonderful example of how the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program supports individuals with disabilities in reaching their employment and independent living goals. With personalized services and gentle guidance, VR helps open doors to meaningful opportunities and brighter futures.

“Ray” of Hope: Empowering Lives Through VR



Hi, I’m Raymond D. Diaz, and I’ve been with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) for a little over two years.

What I enjoy most about my job is supporting individuals with disabilities as they work toward their employment goals. It’s inspiring to see

them build new skills, gain confidence, and succeed in the workplace.

One of the highlights of my time here was hearing directly from individuals about how much they appreciate the services we provide. Moments like these remind me how meaningful our work is.

On my free time, I like to work outside, tending to my plants and animals. On the weekends, I definitely make it a point to head out to the beach for a relaxing fun in the sun day.

To my colleagues – thank you for the great work you do. A special shoutout to our VR Counselor Aides for always stepping up and helping us out when it’s needed most. You’re appreciated every day!



SRC Members Convene for April 23, 2025 Meeting



Former SRC Vice Chair Preston Basa (left), representing the State Educational Agency, and Council Fiscal Officer Gregory Borja (right), representing the Client Assistance Program (CAP), share a quick photo after the meeting.



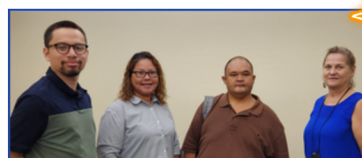
Antonelli Rosario (left) of Rota is the new SRC Vice Chair. Cherry Mae Penaranda (center) from Tinian steps up as Chair of the Transition and Assistive Technology Committee, joined by her mom and travel escort, Charito Cristoria (right).



Maria Olopai (left) joins the SRC representing the Parent Training and Information Center, pictured with OVR Case Services Manager Rose Ann Billy-Ichiuo (right).



SILC Members Connect for April 30, 2025 Meeting



A full quorum gathered for this meeting, joined by members of the OVR management team and community members.

Officers of the Statewide Independent Living Council (from left to right): Newly-elected Fiscal Officer Felipe Aquino, Jr. from Tinian; Vice Chair Martha Hocog from Rota; Chair Nicolas Torres; and Secretary Susan Satur.

Employers: Access No-Cost Business Services with OVR

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) offers no-cost services to help businesses create inclusive, supportive workplaces. Services include consultations on job accommodations, disability employment training, and funding opportunities for On-the-Job Training (OJT).

We also provide resources on building a diverse workforce and disability employment laws. To learn more, call us at (670) 322-6537/38 or email us at nmidir@ovrgov.net. We'd love to connect!



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