



## Our Youth, Our Future

As a result of the Our Youth, Our Future strategic initiative, the Youth of Extension (YOE) program was created to address youth needs and community program gaps. Shaped by Extension & Outreach youth-reported data and an assessment of available community programs, the YOE program targeted Guam middle and high school students. In the initial phase of the program, the youth gained skills and knowledge in project planning to take on community action projects involving cultural identity, life skills, financial management and cultural foods. Youth participants planned and implemented, their projects and evaluated the program under the mentorship of UOG Extension Professionals to address four key areas: resource management, cultural foods, healthy living (5-2-1-Almost None), and cultural identity. They identified these topics relevant to their lives by developing self-discovery, self-conception, and self-perception. Each youth-led project was planned to be presented by the YOE ambassadors (participants) at the first-ever Youth of Extension: Taking Action Conference, which did not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this did not stop the youth ambassadors. With the guidance from Extension professionals, YOE ambassadors redirected their efforts to a virtual approach to showcase their projects and accomplishments. YOE ambassadors produced a "How-to-Grow" introductory guide and hands-on activity, a peer-to-peer or youth-to-parent model to deliver resource management education, a 5-2-1-Almost None social marketing toolkit, a modified Pacific recipe cards and "how-to" video, and a cultural identity journal and book for Guam's youth. Youth ambassadors expressed interest in



continuing the Youth of Extension program to serve in leadership roles as peer mentors to future YOE ambassadors. The Our Youth, Our Future strategic initiative was successful through the efforts of the youth participants, parental support, University of Guam student volunteers, and UOG Cooperative Extension & Outreach professionals.

***If you are interested in learning more about this program, reach out to our Extension Professionals below:***

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