



PRESS RELEASE

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Women entrepreneurs to lead discussion on sustainability solutions

Entering its final two weeks, the University of Guam Virtual Conference Series on Island Sustainability will feature distinguished women business leaders from across the globe in its session this Friday. The session will focus on the role of business in achieving green economic growth and sustainable development.

The sixth weekly installment of the conference is titled “Women Business Leaders: Sustainability Solutionaries” and is scheduled for 9 a.m. (ChST UTC+10) on June 5. Registration is of no charge at www.uog.edu/cis2020.

In 2015, the United Nations member states adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve a more prosperous, equitable, and sustainable world for all by the year 2030. Of the 17 SDGs, the fifth goal is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Not only does it lead to equity, fairness, and rights in representation, it also achieves stronger governance and better economic outcomes.

But while there’s been progress in recent decades — to include laws being reformed to advance gender equality and more women in positions of leadership — and Guam itself has elected its first female governor and its first female-majority legislature, many challenges still remain across the world, especially in the time of COVID-19.

Curating and moderating this week’s conference session will be Amanda Ellis, the director of global partnerships for the Global Futures Laboratory and the executive director for Hawaii and Asia Pacific for the Julie Ann Wrigley Global Institute of Sustainability at Arizona State University. Ellis is a former New Zealand ambassador to the United Nations and was a keynote speaker at the 2019 UOG Conference on Island

Sustainability. She is the co-chair of the WE Empower UN SDG Challenge, a global business competition for women entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs who are advancing the UN's SDGs and inspiring entire communities to create the world they want to see by 2030.

Panel 1 will feature "The Aggregators," including:

- Aimeé Christensen, founder and chair of Sun Valley Institute and CEO of Christensen Global Strategies (Idaho)
- Meagan Fallone, director and CEO of Barefoot College International (India)
- Meli James, co-founder, Mana Up (Hawaii)
- Maria Eugenia Leon Guerrero, executive vice president and chief operations officer for the Bank of Guam

Panel 2 will feature "The Entrepreneurs," including:

- Brynn Foster, founder and director of Voyaging Foods (Hawaii)
- Adimaimalaga Tafunai, co-founder and executive director of Women in Business Development Inc. (Samoa)
- Brianne West, founder and CEO of Ethique (New Zealand)

Following the panels, participants will have an opportunity to interact with the panel and each other during the Virtual Networking Reception immediately after the conference. This week's reception will be hosted by Holly Rustick, president of the Guam Women's Chamber of Commerce and founder and owner of WEGO Consulting, and Vanessa L. Williams, attorney at law and founding member of the Guam Women's Chamber of Commerce.

The virtual conference series will conclude on Friday, June 12.

In its first five sessions, the conference has had a total of 1,560 participants on Zoom from 75 different countries, states, and territories, along with more than 10,000 views on social media platforms. Register for this week's session and check out highlights, conference videos, and more at www.uog.edu/cis2020.

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Photo caption:



Amanda Ellis delivers the keynote speech at the University of Guam Conference on Island Sustainability in 2019. Ellis will be moderating the panel for the sixth installment of the 2020 conference, which will be held virtually on June 5. She is the director for global partnerships of Global Futures Laboratory and the executive director for Hawaii and Asia Pacific of the Julie Ann Wrigley Global Institute of Sustainability at Arizona State University.

Photo courtesy of the University of Guam