

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UOG School of Engineering produces first 12 graduates

This Sunday, the University of Guam will celebrate a historic milestone as 12 graduates become the first to earn civil engineering degrees from the university. Marking a second historic milestone is Class of Fanuchånan 2021 valedictorian Anthony Reyes, the university's first valedictorian from the School of Engineering.

Evolved from a two-year pre-engineering program that had been offered at UOG since 1989, the four-year degree program launched in 2019, when it was formally approved by the WASC Senior College and University Commission.

“This milestone is important for the School of Engineering because it will give an opportunity for local talent to stay, work, and serve our island of Guam,” said Ujwalkumar Patil, UOG associate professor of civil engineering. “This will help fill civil engineering positions in Guam and surrounding islands and improve the engineering infrastructure.”

The civil engineering program was created in response to the chronic shortage of local engineers in Guam and the Western Pacific region.



Ujwalkumar Patil, Ph.D.

“There is a current need for engineers on Guam and our region,” said Ken Rekdahl, a professional engineer and vice president at Dueñas, Camacho & Associates Inc., who also serves as chairman of the UOG School of Engineering Advisory Council. “This will likely be the case for the next five to 10 years with the buildup and construction industry.”

The School of Engineering has more than 200 students enrolled. It aims to prepare students for entry-level positions in civil engineering, for graduate school, and for societal leadership.

“The program is special due to its unique geographical location, being the only engineering school in the Western Pacific, the commitment of our professional faculty toward students, and low tuition rates,” said Lee Yudin, acting dean of the School of Engineering.



Lee Yudin, Ph.D.

Graduates looking to contribute to the island

Graduating senior Jezreel Sabangan said she chose to major in civil engineering because of the contributions she could make to society.

“I felt a great passion for pursuing this field because of its significance to society,” Sabangan said. “I would like to contribute to the island through such expertise — to ensure the safety of the people as well as maintain the overall environment.”

UOG alumna and graduating senior Kayleena Blas enrolled in the program after graduating in 2019 with a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics.

“As soon as I graduated in 2019, SENG’s full program started, so I jumped right back into studies,” Blas said. “I feel extremely grateful for the relationships I’ve built with my professors. They challenged us but always provided real-world experience of what may be expected of us as entry-level engineers. My plan is to pass my Fundamentals of Engineering exam and diligently work as an engineer-in-training until I’m able to take my PE exam in five to six years.”

Class valedictorian Anthony Reyes said that while the program was challenging, the students received a lot of support from the School of Engineering faculty and staff.

“The School of Engineering went the extra mile — looking for industry partners to help line us up with internships over the summers,” he said. “They really helped with our eventual transition to the workforce by actually connecting us with jobs and internships while we were still in school.”

The path to accreditation

The conferring of degrees this Sunday will pave the way for the School of Engineering to apply for accreditation. The school must have graduates before it can apply for certification through the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, or ABET.

“This certification is crucial for our graduating students for their future professional growth. It will also help UOG attract international students from all around the world,” Patil said.

Holding a degree from an ABET-accredited university is a requirement to obtain professional licensure. The Guam Board of Registration for Professional Engineers, Architects, and Land Surveyors approved a waiver for the ABET accreditation for this class of graduates to take the Fundamentals of Engineering, or FE, exam. The FE license will allow the graduates to intern under a professional engineer and gain the experience needed to ultimately take the Professional Engineer exam.

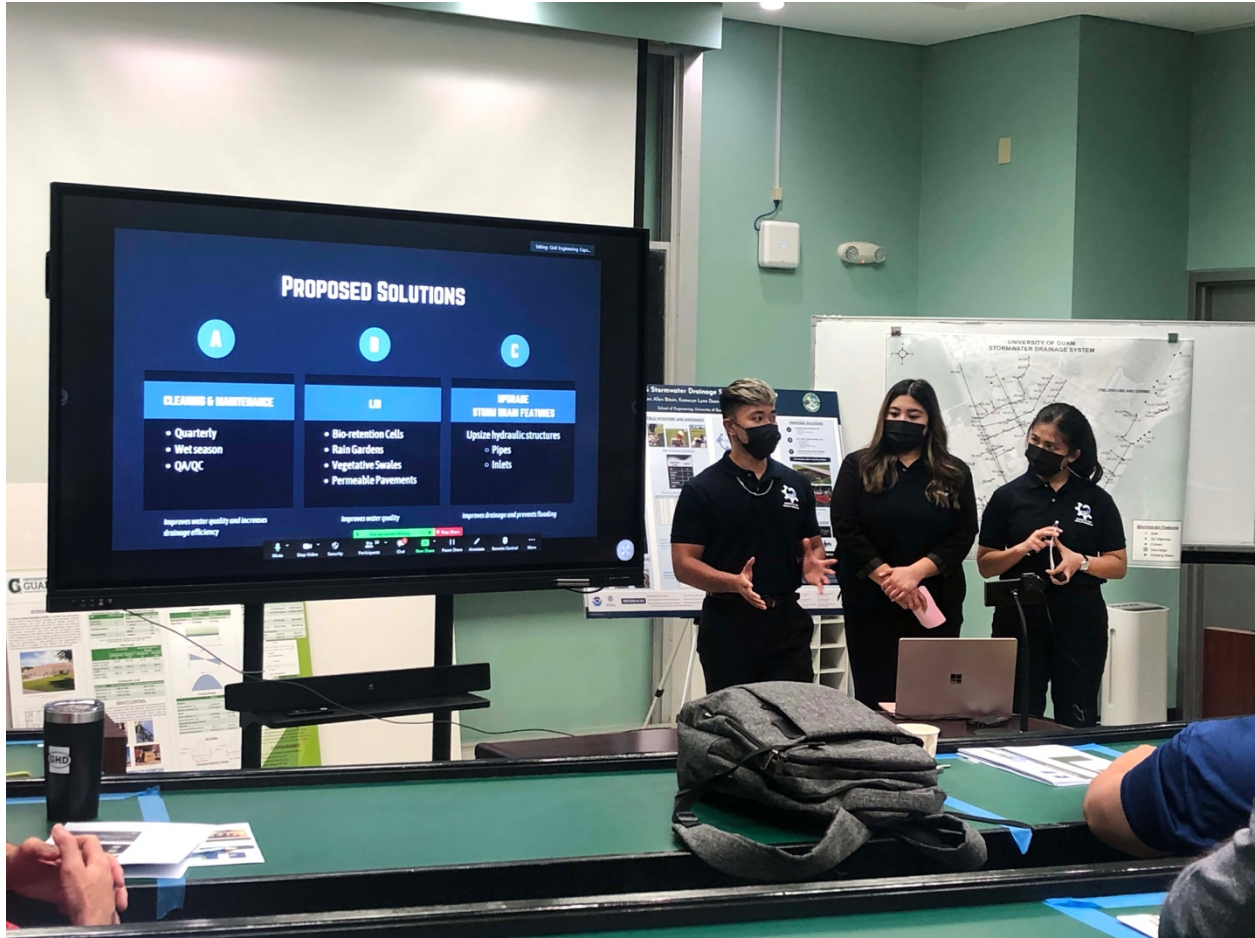
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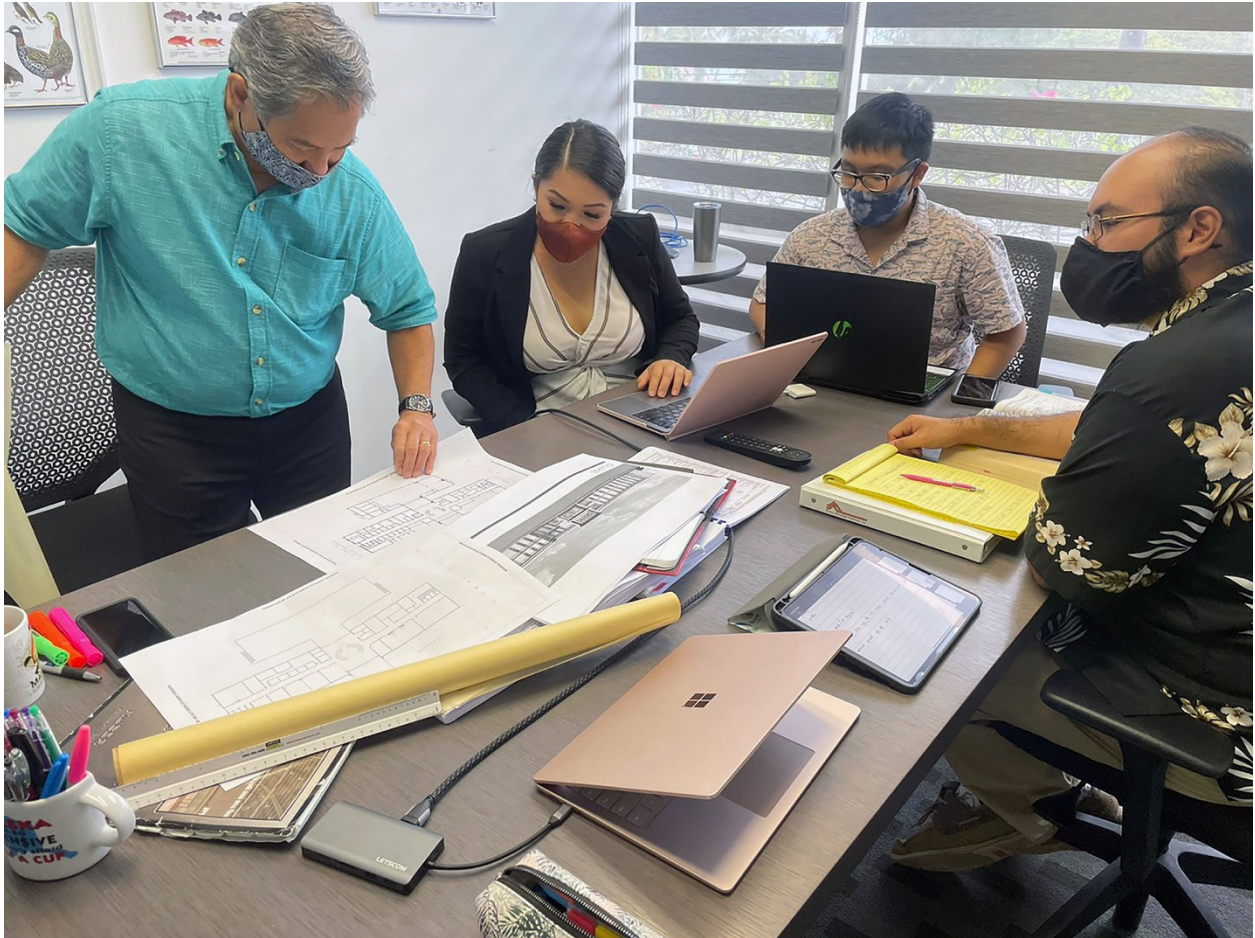
2021-uog-seng-graduates-1

Maegan Catahay, left, and Anthony Reyes, two of the first-ever civil engineering graduates from the University of Guam, stand with a photo of Shahram Khosrowpanah, the founding dean of the university’s School of Engineering, who retired this semester. Catahay and Reyes are among 12 graduates who will earn their bachelor’s in civil engineering at the UOG commencement ceremony this Sunday.



2021-uog-seng-graduates-2

University of Guam civil engineering students present their capstone project on Dec. 3. (From left) Marc Bituin; Kameryn Duenas; and Jezreel Sabangan.



2021-uog-seng-graduates-3

UOG civil engineering students look over an architectural plan for their design project with Thomas Camacho, a structural engineer and principal at Dueñas, Camacho & Associates. (From left) Camacho; Kayleena Blas; Ashton Analista; and Anthony Reyes.



2021-uog seng-graduates-4

Civil engineering major Maegan Catahay prepares a concrete cylinder into a loading machine for her Civil Engineering Materials class on Sept. 10 at the ENGEO Lab at the University of Guam.



2021-uog-seng-graduates-5
UOG civil engineering students at the Guam Waterworks Authority wastewater treatment construction site in Upper Tumon. (From left) Anthony Reyes; Ashton Analista; Kayleena Blas; and Jaelene Manibusan.

Photos courtesy of the University of Guam