

Destination Guam



Registration #201509

In Our Own
Backyard

My father served in the Navy. He enlisted after high school. He served during the end of the Korean War. He was proud to have served and appreciated the skills he acquired during that time and being able to come home and afford college.

Growing up I thought all Americans were afforded the same rights and privileges that comes with serving their country, until I met some fellow Americans whose family originated from Guam, U.S.

When the opportunity was given to “Xplore” a destination of our choosing I felt compelled to delve further into this family’s place of origin, and while doing this I discovered how uneducated I was about our own country.

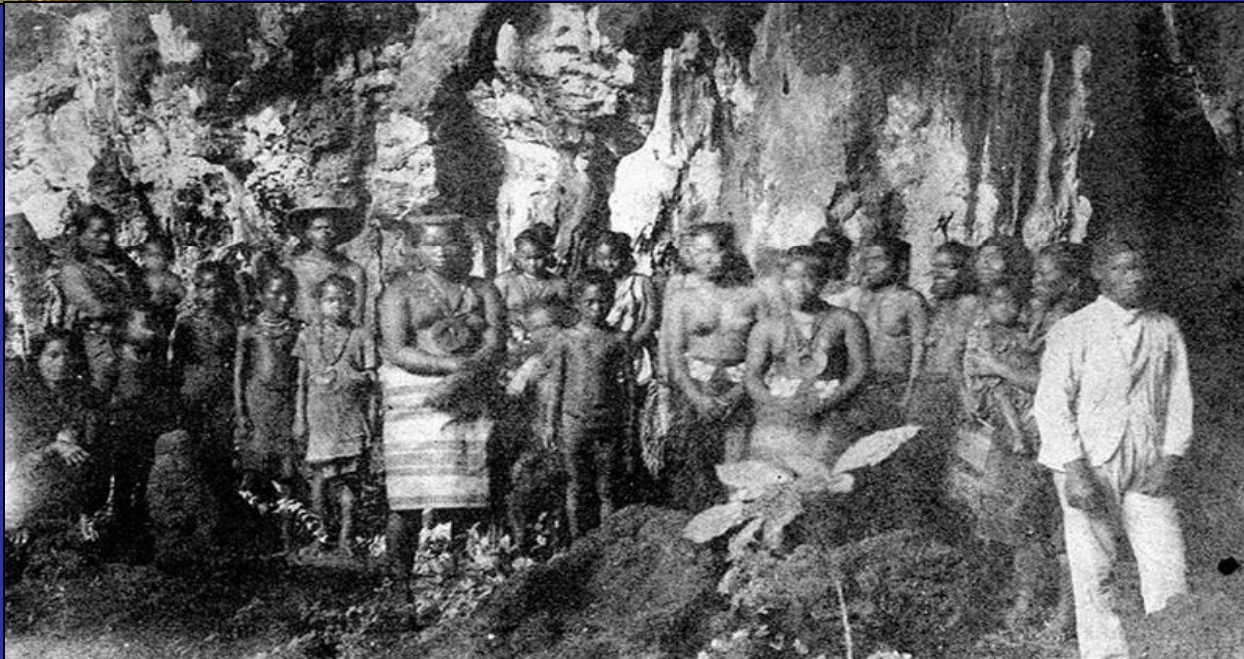


Guam is 32 miles long and 10 miles wide. It is a territory. It's too small to get the consideration of statehood. But, because of it's ideal location in the Pacific, the U.S. realizes their importance. We took back Guam from the Japanese 3 years after they invaded.

Guamanians are American citizens from birth. They do not need their passport to travel to the U.S. They serve in the U.S. Military at a rate 3 times greater than any of the States, but they cannot vote for President, nor can their Senators cast votes in Congress. They receive the smallest amount of federal aid for their veterans, and that has been cut even further the last two years. Their closest VA hospital is in Hawaii, 8 thousand miles away. The people of Guam fight for democracy for others, yet they do not receive those same rights.

My Purpose in Guam

- To explore their ancestry.
- Discover how Guam evolved and become a part of the U.S.
- Tour their unique stone latte architecture.
- Research why they have such a passion for selflessly serving their country.
- Bring awareness to the struggles of their veterans through interviews with fellow veterans and their families.



My Journey

➤ Through the family I met here in Riverside they have helped to schedule interviews for me with a College Historian from the University of Guam, two senators, and several war veterans from different eras.

My Goal

➤ Find out how to help shed a light on the lack of aid their veterans receive from the U.S. Government by the following methods:

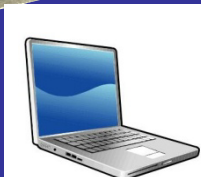
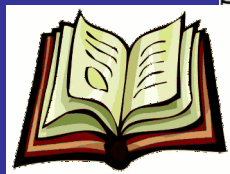
➤ Write letters to Congress

➤ Get involved with the NOVCA Group

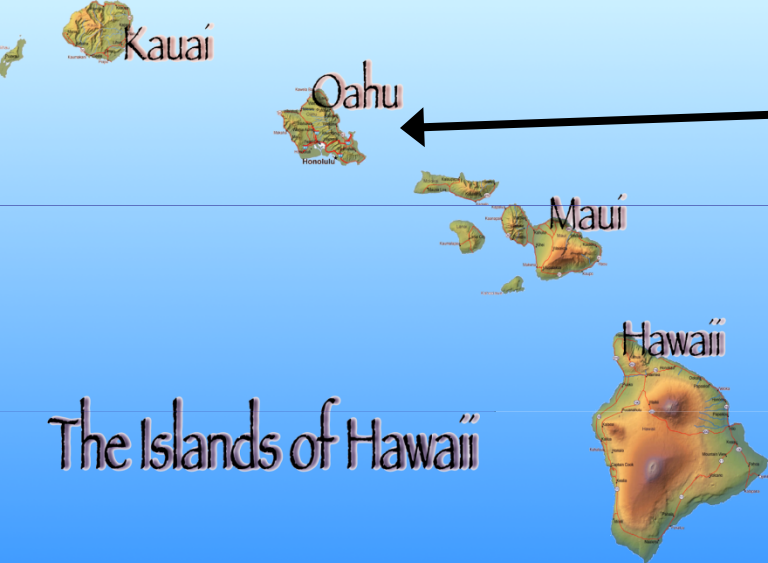
➤ Have Ruhnau Clarke donate time to a Wounded Warriors project.

➤ Other ideas that might be discovered during my journey.





I plan on sharing the message with the office through audio of my interviews, daily blogging, and lots of photos. I will gather all this into an audio/video presentation upon my return with solid ways for us to help.



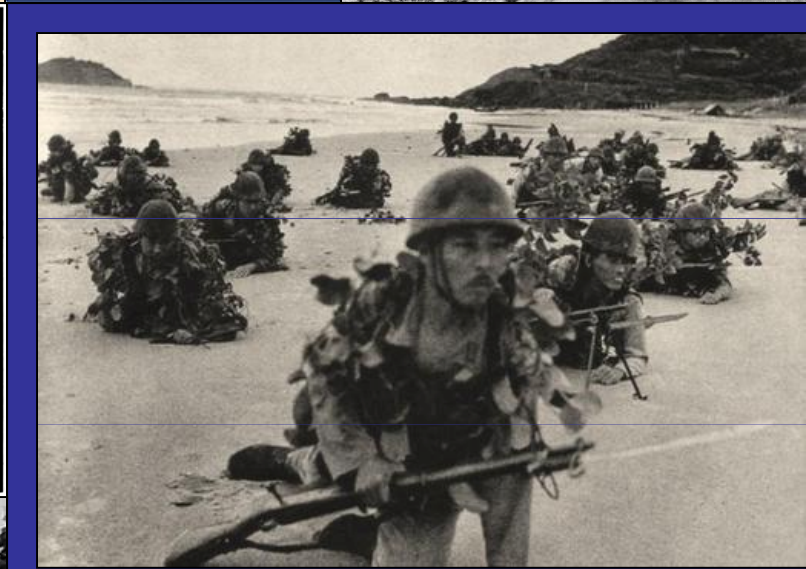
The Islands of Hawaii

My first day of travels will begin with a trip to the Pearl Harbor Memorial in Hawaii, to pay tribute. The day after the attack on Pearl Harbor is when the Japanese captured the island of Guam, December 8, 1941.



Guam was the only U.S. land to be occupied by foreign enemies during World War II.







The Chamorro people who inhabited the island of Guam were faithful Americans. When the Japanese invaded, they helped hide 6 Navy servicemen who had fled to the jungle. The Japanese executed all but one of those men, and several Chamorro's who they suspected were helping. The lone survivor, George Tweed hid for 2 years before signaling an American destroyer and getting rescued.



AGAT SCHOOL

WELFARE & EDUCATION DEPT. MILITARY GOVERNMENT GUAM



During my interviews with the veterans, I also want to interact with their families and hear what they struggle with and what types of help and support they envision for the future.







I also plan on spending a couple of days enjoying the island with it's beauty and unique culture.



Researching this project has already enlightened me in many ways. I feel strongly that what I will walk away with from this trip will also impact my co-workers.

I am of the belief that we all should give back no matter our own personal circumstances. When we place the emphasis on someone else it will still leave a mark on us.

There is so much work that could be done all over this world, but I believe it begins.....



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