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# Bright future for Bertine at UWC

## Finance off to a great start on audit

Bertine Fo'real Lakjohn of Majuro Coop School is the latest recipient of a prestigious United World College scholarship.

The UWC's local committee held its sixth Annual RMI Scholarship Selections at the Long Island campus of the University of the South Pacific last Thursday.

Eight students joined the selections committee and spent the day together enjoying themselves and getting to know one another. Only one scholarship was awarded by UWC this year and it was offered to Bertine. While the offer is not official yet, a school representative expects no problems.

The National UWC Committee members are Dr. Irene Taafaki, Chair, Alson Kelen, Claire Loeak, Professor Andrew Garrod and, for the first time, a returning alumni of UWC, Eve Burns, sat on the committee. The selections coordinators are University of the South Pacific's Jacqueline Lakmis and Micronesian Conservation Trust's Tamara Greenstone-Alefaio. Everyone involved congratulates Bertine on her accomplishment and wishes her luck in her adventures in Japan!

Bertine said her dream is to "become a doctor just like my parents. Both my parents and my older brother work at the hospital."

When asked how she felt about winning the scholarship, Bertine said she's still processing the fact that she got accepted. "But this will be my sec-

## Tenth student to get chance of a lifetime

ond time going to Japan. The first time I went during the student exchange program when I was younger."

Coop school Principal Jade Ricketts said: "We are sad that she is leaving us but we are happy she got the opportunity to go."

The Japanese UWC campus will be a huge change from the Coop campus. It is the former International School of Asia (ISAK) in Karuizawa, an alpine resort area an hour's train ride from Tokyo.

The UWC ISAK school is UWC's 17th school, opening in August, 2017. Thirty students from 30 countries will join the current international group of 45 ISAK students.

Bertine will be the tenth student from the Marshall Islands to attend UWC. To date four students — Kami Mackphie, Sage deBrum, Eve Burns and Selina Leem — have graduated with their International Baccalaureate while five students continue their studies: Cathrine Cheng in China, Gevena Labbo Pedro in Hong Kong, Beverley Johnson in Singapore, Kelyna Jabon Glanry in Germany and Victoria Jamore in Wales, UK.



The smile says it all: Coop student Bertine Lakjohn. Photo: Hilary Hosia.

The government-wide fiscal year 2016 audit is already in motion, the first time in several years for it to get started at the beginning of the year.

For the past five years, the government-wide audit — known as the "single" audit — has been late to be completed because of poor organization within the Ministry of Finance.

The FY2015 audit, though late, showed the first signs of the Ministry of Finance getting back on schedule for producing its annual audit in timely fashion. Finance Secretary May Bing said Finance established its "trial balance" for FY2016 this past January. A trial balance is considered a key requirement for auditors, who cannot begin reviewing financial documents until this is produced by the entity being audited.

"Audit field work for FY2016 has already started," said RMI Auditor General Junior Patrick. He described this as a "big improvement compared to previous years." The single audit is supposed to be completed by June 30 of the year following the fiscal year.

# Big ceremony for BOMI's new Kili branch



BOMI's Patrick Chen and ROC Ambassador Daniel Tang.

The Bank of Marshall Islands opened its ninth branch Monday, with the latest financial institution being on Kili Island.

BOMI operations manager Kakom Paul flew into Kili last Tuesday with a support team made up of IT guy Kuyell Joklur; mobile banking expert, new accounts officer, and teller Neil Sawej; and operations supervisor Paul Ralpho. The National Telecommunications Authority's Douglas Kilemente also flew with the team to help on IT.

This Monday, the VIP group arrived on Air Marshall Islands. "The group included our President and CEO Patrick Chen, US Ambassador Kar-

en Stewart, and ROC-Taiwan Ambassador Daniel Tang, Chief Secretary Justina Langidrik, MAL-Gov representative Austin Jurelang, and Mayors Association representative Junior Kabua," Kakom said. There was a greeting line followed by welcoming remarks at the branch by Kakom and Kili-Bikini-Ejit's Mayor Anderson Jibas.

The ribbon-cutting was done by Senator Eldon Note's wife Tamar, Mayor Jibas' wife Rise, and Kakom. The ceremony was following by lunch.

The bank's other branches are, on Majuro, in Uliga, the airport, and Laura, and on Wotje, Jaluit, Ebeye, Kwajalein, and Roi Namur.