

LOURDES A. LEON GUERRERO  
MAGA'HÅGA • GOVERNOR



JOSHUA F. TENORIO  
SIGUNDO MAGA'LÅHI • LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

## **Leon Guerrero-Tenorio Administration Announces Appointments to the Guam Visitors Bureau and Commission on Decolonization**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** - Thursday, January 31, 2019

Hagåtña, Guam - The Leon Guerrero-Tenorio Administration today announced additional appointments to cabinet positions, pending legislative confirmation.

Governor Leon Guerrero will formally submit their nominations to the Guam Legislature as well as submit recommendations to their respective boards and commissions.

**“Pilar Lagaña is an award winning tourism executive who has elevated Guam’s presence on the international stage. Paired with Bobby Alvarez and his expertise at the frontlines in hospitality, I am confident in their abilities to bring the island’s leading industry to the next level,”** said Governor Leon Guerrero.

**“Melvin Won Pat-Borja has been a voice in the discussion for political status for many years. He’s also a longtime teacher with the skillsets we need to educate the people of Guam on their options as we push forward in our journey towards self-determination,”** said Lieutenant Governor Tenorio.

The nominees and respective positions are as follows:

### **Pilar Lagaña, President and CEO of Guam Visitors Bureau**

Pilar Lagaña has been with the Guam Visitors Bureau since 1977. In anticipation for a career in tourism and after her reign as Miss Guam, she moved to Japan. Her understanding of the country’s culture, heritage, and language helped her advance quickly at GVB where she’s played leading roles in establishing foundations for other markets, including Korea, Taiwan, North America, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Russia, Micronesia, and China. She has also led efforts for niche and lucrative market segments, such as scuba diving, LGBTQ travel, adventure travel, religious travel, and Meetings, Incentives, Conferences & Exhibitions (MICE). Today, she heads GVB’s Global Marketing Team and is currently working to pioneer new market sources in

Southeast Asia. Laguaña is an active member of Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), a global organization that awarded her the prestigious PATA Award of Merit in 2009. Most recently, she was awarded the 2017 Lifetime Achievement in Travel and Tourism Award by USA's Women in Travel & Tourism International (WITTI) in Washington, D.C..

**Robert Alvarez, Vice President of Guam Visitors Bureau**

Robert "Bobby" Alvarez started his career in tourism in 1984 as a windsurfing instructor at the Pacific Islands Club Guam. During the tourism boom in the late 1980s and early 1990s, he assisted in the grand openings for Pacific Star Hotel, Hyatt Regency Guam, Mangilao Golf Resort, Westin Resort, Leo Palace Golf Resort, and Sandcastle. While working at various hotels, restaurants, and entertainment venues, he quickly learned to converse in basic Japanese. He was able to work his way up to management and also taught basic Japanese language classes to staff at hotels he worked at. He has since taken on roles as the Executive Assistant for former Lieutenant Governor Ray Tenorio and Director of Business Development for Galaide Professional Services Incorporated (GPSI) Guam.

**Melvin Won Pat-Borja, Executive Director of Commission on Decolonization**

Melvin Won Pat-Borja has been an educator in the public school system for over a decade, most recently with Southern High School, where he developed the curriculum and pedagogy for their Creative Writing Program. He is the co-founder of Sinangân-ta Youth Movement, Pacific Tongues, and Youth Speaks Hawaii, which are Spoken Arts Education programs that promote literacy, critical thinking, and public speaking to Pacific Islander youth. He was recognized by the Micronesia Youth Services Network as the 2011 Youth Services Supporter of the Year. Melvin received his B.Ed. in Secondary Education and his M.A. in Pacific Island Studies from the University of Hawaii at Mānoa. He has been a member of the Commission on Decolonization since 2016 and presented testimony at the United Nations in 2017 before the Special Political and Decolonization Committee.

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For inquiries, please contact Krystal Paco, Press Secretary, at 787-3229 or [krystal.paco@guam.gov](mailto:krystal.paco@guam.gov).