



Habele

OUTER ISLAND EDUCATION FUND



ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021

Non-profit serving students across Micronesia
Established by returned Peace Corps Volunteers in 2006

A Letter from the Founder



This was another challenging year for students across Micronesia. Island economies were shocked by travel bans, disruption of global supply chains, and personnel shortages. Micronesian schools were particularly hard hit.

There are longer term complexities as well. Notably, environmental stewardship, lag in the renegotiation of expiring US economic assistance, and the evolving and widening influence of China. This year, speaking at the United Nations, the Micronesian President made an unprecedented equation between Micronesia's "Enduring Partnership" with the United States and Micronesia's "Great Friendship" with China. Tensions between the national and state governments, which Micronesia's prescient founding fathers hoped to avoid, may amplify as the national government continues to expand its size and scope.

Still, I am proud to report that Habel, in our small and targeted way, is a bright spot. We are expanding educational access and accomplishment throughout Micronesia. We are extending empowering opportunities to students and schools and along the way modeling the best aspects of the historic US-Micronesia relationship.

Habel's book donations place quality, age-appropriate books in the hands of young children, and on the shelves of school libraries. Our tuition scholarships allow smart, hardworking students from lower-income families to attend the highest performing independent schools, where they are most likely to graduate and head off to college. Habel equips master craftsmen and culture teachers with niche tools and helps document their underrepresented island artforms. In partnership with the U.S. Department of the Interior, Habel's high school-based robotics league provides hands-on practical learning in science and math all across the FSM.

As always, this work is driven by specific locally-stated needs and direct requests from our partners in families, schools, and villages across Micronesia. Though Peace Corps left Micronesia in 2018, the legacy of practical, empowering, people-to-people development lives on through Habel.

I am grateful to so many individuals with personal connection to the Islands for all they've done for and through Habel this last year. The time, talent, and donations we've invested uplift and enrich students all across Micronesia. As the only US nonprofit with a dedicated mission to serve students and schools in Micronesia, we know if we don't do it, *no one else will.*

Neil Mellen, Founder



About Habele



Habele serves students and schools across Micronesia.

A nonprofit created by former Peace Corps Volunteers, Habele supports island students by:

Scholarships. Habele awards needs-based scholarships to students at Micronesia’s top rated private elementary and high schools.

Books. Habele donates books to school libraries across the Federated States, and mails books directly to children before they enter Kindergarten.

Robotics. Habele equips, trains and organizes robotics teams at high schools in all four Micronesian states.

Traditional Skills. Habele provides carvers, weavers and other traditional craftsmen with specialty tools, supporting these mentors as they preserve cultural skills.

Habele is a network of Americans and Micronesians who share the belief that each island child –no matter how isolated– deserves the chance to reach their full potential.

These locally-driven programs prepare Micronesian children to thrive in their villages and beyond the reef.

If you believe in the potential of children in the remote islands of the western Pacific, join us!



Scan with your phone to hear Micronesian students read this page!



Where is Micronesia?



Micronesia is the broad term for the many tiny islands stretching across the western Pacific Ocean. Within the vast Pacific, Micronesia lies west of Polynesia and north of Melanesia.

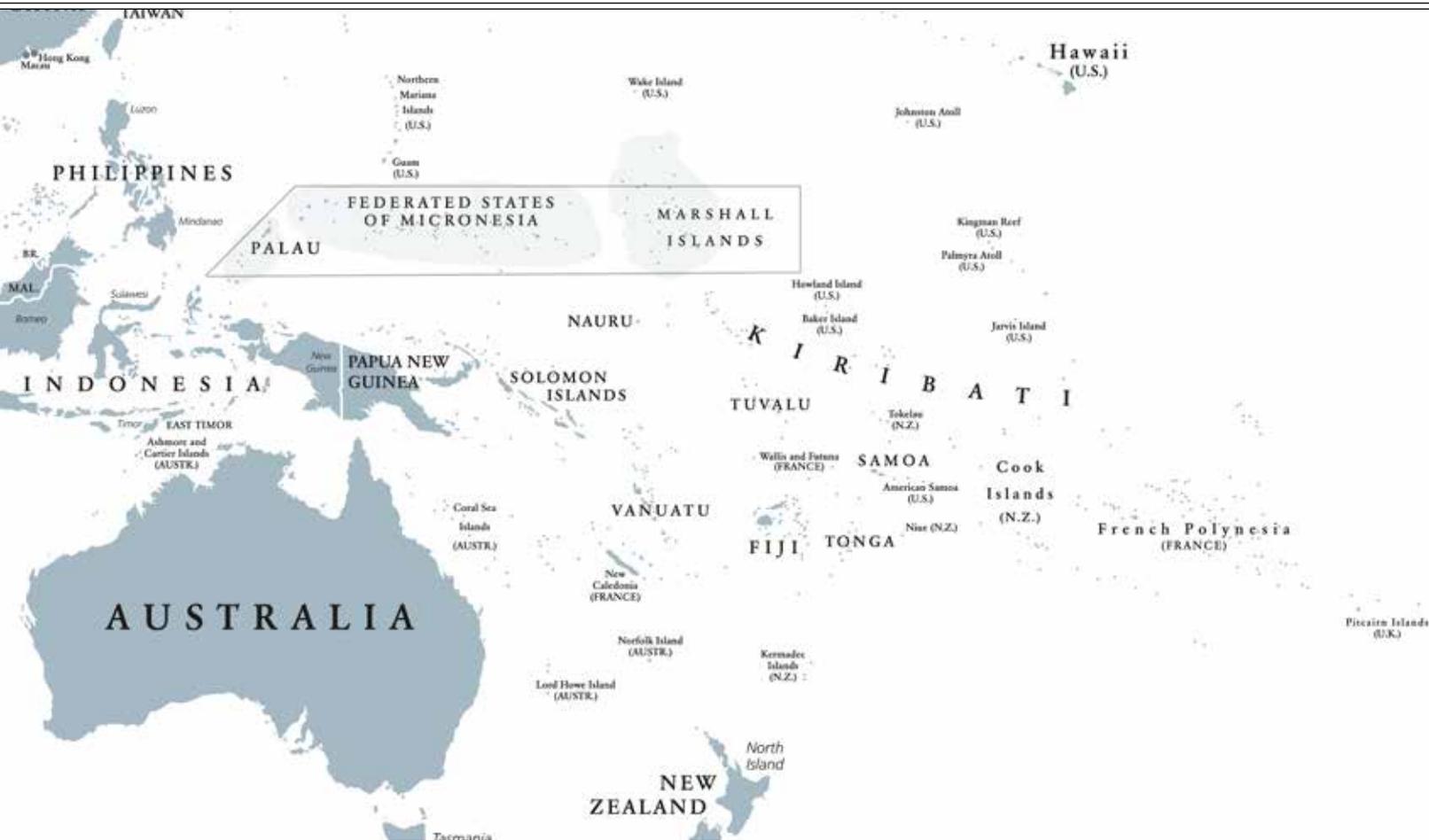
“Micronesia” is also used to refer to independent nations of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau. The Caroline Islands, today’s Federated States of Micronesia, lie just south of the American Territory of Guam.

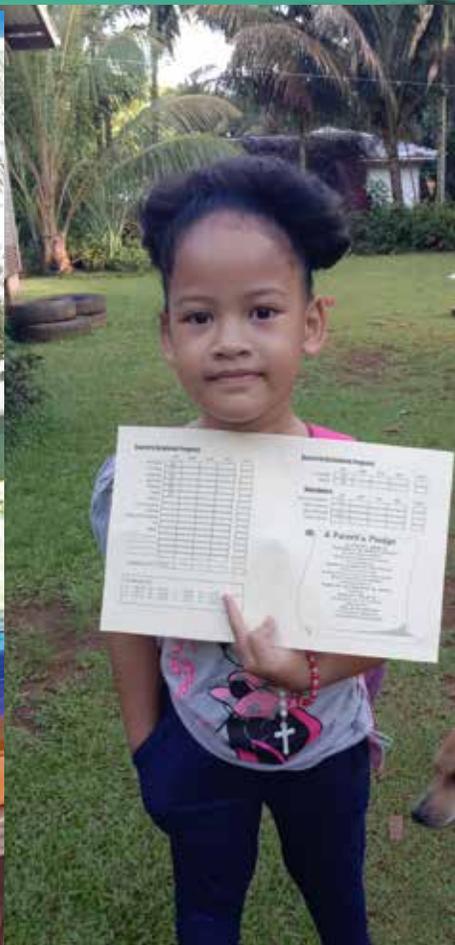
Once part of a United Nation’s sanctioned US Trust Territory, these three countries enjoy a unique “Freely Associated States” relationship with the United States. Before US liberation of the islands, they endured centuries of colonialism under successive Spanish, German, and Japan occupation.

These FAS each have a Compact of Free Association with the United States. The COFAs enshrine a special decades-long development partnership. The Compacts provide for defense and economic assistance, as well as unique eligibility for Micronesians within the US such as federal tuition assistance to attend American universities.

Challenges remain. These small, disparate and multicultural island societies struggle to develop economically in the complex, information-driven global economy.

Too often, ambitious Micronesian students can not take advantage of higher education opportunities COFAs afford within the US because they aren’t properly prepared. Habele was created to help such students reach their full academic, and personal, potential.





Scholarships

What we do

Habele's K-12 tuition scholarships ensure bright, hardworking students have access to the best education possible by helping to pay tuition costs at independent elementary and high schools.

How

Scholarships generally cover between 50 and 75 percent of tuition and fees. Students must maintain and report high levels of academic achievement every quarter, applying each year for continued Habele support. Checks are written directly to the schools in the child's name.

Where and who

Students from all four Micronesian states are served. Based on need and merit, these scholarships often focus on remote outer island, rural village, and female students.

How we pay for it

Since 2006, every Habele scholarship dollar has come from donations made by individuals in the United States who have some personal connection to the Islands.

Looking ahead

Habele hopes to award at least twenty-eight scholarships in 2022-23 and introduce a new Memorial Scholarship honoring the memory of a distinguished Micronesian Judge.

2021 Highlights

26 Tuition Scholarships awarded
8 primary and high schools

How you can help

- Make a donation to Habele to pay for scholarships.
- Encourage families with ambitious children and economic need to apply.



Books - Young Island Readers



What we do

Young Island Readers offers all children born in Yap the opportunity to receive one new, age-appropriate, book through the mail each month until their fifth birthday.

How

Young Island Readers is made possible by the Dollywood Foundation's Imagination Library which partners with local nonprofits to provide age-appropriate books every month to children up to age five. Habel also collaborates with the Yap State Hospital and Yap Catholic High School to ensure all newborns are signed up. Books are sent, individually wrapped and addressed, through USPS Media Mail.

Where and who

All children born on Yap Proper are eligible to sign up. Forms are provided at the hospital.

How we pay for it

Habel pays approximately \$2.50 per book, or \$150 for the sixty books a child will receive over the course of their five-year participation. The College of Micronesia-FSM made a onetime grant toward the launch of YIR; all the remaining money has come from individual US donors.

Looking ahead

Habel hopes to sustain the program with new sign ups on Yap and begin to extend Young Island Readers into the Outer Islands of Yap in 2022.

2021 Highlights

1,093 books delivered

149 newborns in Yap signed up

\$150 cost for one child to receive a book each month for five years



How you can help

- Make a donation to Habel to pay for Young Island Readers.
- Check with new parents on Yap that you know to ensure they signed up.

Books - Donations to Schools



What we do

Schools across Micronesia need books for classrooms and school-based libraries. Habel pairs individuals and groups who have books with educators in the FSM who are seeking them. We'll even pay the postage!

How

Micronesian schools make specific requests for books to Habel, most often elementary or high school level reading books. Volunteers, donors and other friends of Habel gather and box books. Habel pairs requests with donations and provides postage and paperwork for the book donor to simply drop the boxes of at a post office.

Where and who

Library donations serve elementary, high school and community colleges across the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau.

How we pay for it

Books are donated in-kind. Financial donations from individual US donors allow Habel to pay the postage.

Looking ahead

Habel hopes to tackle outstanding requests for elementary and early childhood level reading books in the Outer Islands of Yap and Chuuk States.

2021 Highlights

63 boxes of book delivered

5 recipient schools

How you can help

- Make a donation to pay the cost of mailing books.
- Gather and box books for donating; details at www.habele.org/books and Habel will provide you the postage, labels and importation forms.



Robots

What we do

Habele's Robo League creates capable problem solvers equipped to tackle the challenges and opportunities of the future. It offers some of the world's most remote students the chance to master cutting edge technology.

How

Habele provides equipment, training and organizational support for high school-based robotics teams at public and private high schools across the Federated States of Micronesia. We also provide IT equipment and support to enrich training opportunities in all distance learning endeavors.

Where and who

From Yap Catholic in the west to Kosrae High School in the east, twenty-three high schools across Micronesia participate in the league, including several in the lagoon and outer islands. The learning is largely student driven, offering pupils a hands-on format to develop complex problem solving skills.

How we pay for it

The Robo League is entirely funded by a grant, awarded by the Office of Insular Affairs of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Looking ahead

Habele introduced 3D printers to four high schools in Yap and Pohnpei States. Schools earned the 3D printers in 2020 for excellence in completing Habele's "Robotics Certification Challenge," a challenge requiring staff and students at high schools across Micronesia to successfully complete a robotics certification course. 3D printing provides Robo League students with even more hands-on exposure to advanced technology, while giving endless opportunity for creative exploration.



Traditional Skills



What we do

Habele supports master carvers and weavers who perpetuate traditional cultural skills through the mentorship of young island men and women.

How

Habele makes targeted donations of specialized wood carving tools to canoe builders and school-based culture teachers. Habele also provides thread and weaving equipment to schools and women's associations in Micronesia, as well as migrants in the United States. Our WeavingConnections.org website documents weaving traditions and provides guides to fabrication of weaving equipment and tools.

Where and who

Tools, material and equipment donations are provided to canoe carvers, school-based culture teachers and women's association in the Western Carolines.

How we pay for it

Historically Habele's support for traditional skills came entirely from individual donations. In 2021 this was supplemented by one-time grants from the U.S. Office of Insular Affairs and the Matson Foundation.



Looking ahead

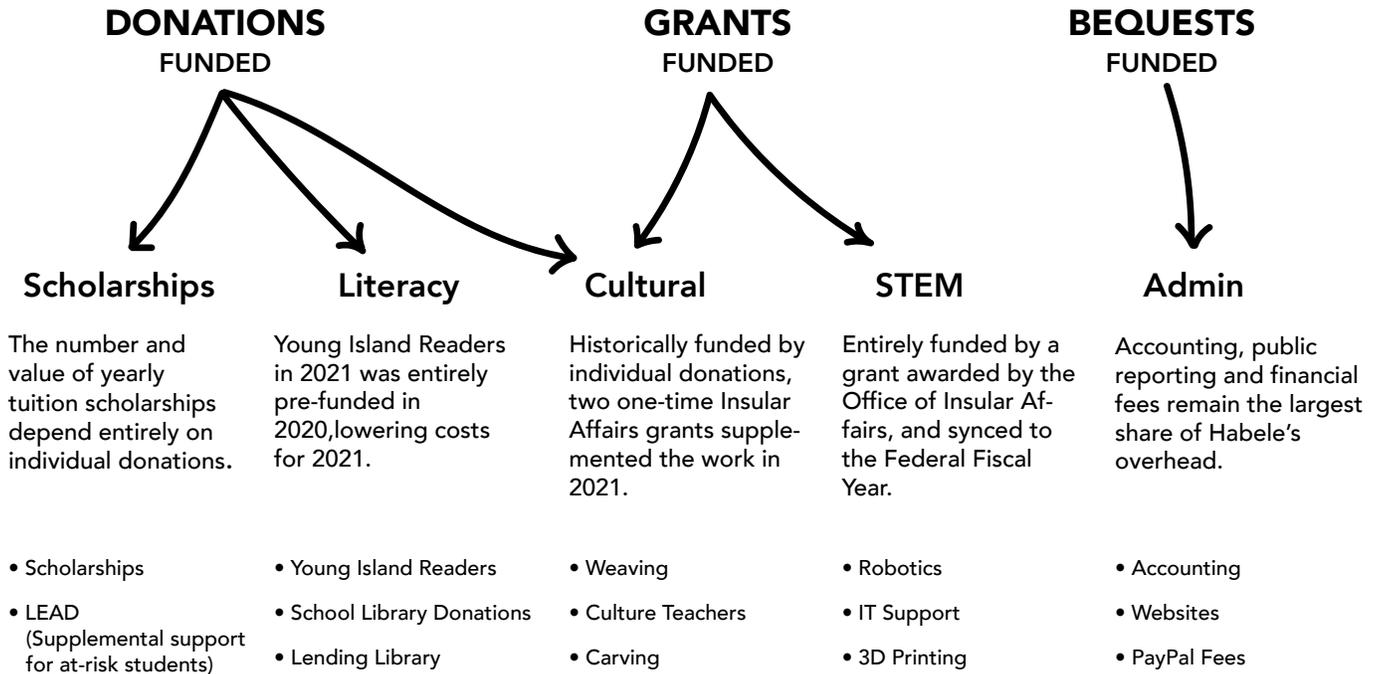
Working with master metalsmith Paul Garrett and carvers across the Carolines, Habele has finalized and field tested a novel Micronesian adze blade which enters production in early 2022 for distribution to carvers by year's end.

2021 Highlights

- 40 adze blades delivered
- 7 boxes of other tools provided
- 120 spools of thread delivered
- 1,825 unique website visitors, WeavingConnections.org

How you can help

- If you have photos of adzes, looms, warp boards or other tools used by craftsmen and women (particularly older photos) sharing these with Habele helps both our work to document cultural practices, as well as refinement to the equipment we provide these mentors.
- Donations to Habele allow us to provide tool donations, maintain and host websites we've created for local cultural groups, and continue the work of documenting traditional skills.



Cash on Hand 12/31/2020 \$90,709*

2021 REVENUES

Donations	\$33,259
Grants	\$388,837
T-Shirt Sales	\$579
Bequests	\$608,788**

Total Revenues \$1,031,463

2021 EXPENSES

Scholarships	\$18,121
Literacy	\$5,873
Cultural	\$26,147
STEM	\$316,245
Admin	\$7,681

Total Expenses \$374,067

Cash on Hand 12/31/2021 \$748,105**

* Primarily carry over of direct funds, tied to the federal fiscal year, obligated to the robotics program

** The last week of 2021, Habele received a significant bequest from a longtime donor. Habele's Board is developing plans to establish an endowment, the earnings of which we hope will pay for all admin, overhead and indirect costs in perpetuity, ensuring the long term viability of Habele.

Our Team



Board of Directors

Alex Sidles, President
Marc MacNamara, Treasurer
Scott Leis, Secretary

Officers

Matt Coleman, Executive Director
Neil Mellen, Administrative Director

Programs

Amelia Weiss, Director of STEM



Habele Outer Island Education Fund
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Please Share Your Feedback



What is your t-shirt size?

In terms of my connection to Micronesia, it's simplest to say I am or was

- Peace Corps Volunteer or Staff
- US Diplomat or US government employee
- Development or technical worker
- Tourist, visitor, or vacationer
- Academic or researcher
- Employee of FSM government or project
- Connected to Micronesia through a friend or family member with a passion

My strongest connection or passion is tied to

- Yap Outer Islands of Yap
- Chuuk Chuuk Lagoon Chuuk Outer Islands
- Pohnpei Outer Islands of Pohnpei
- Kosrae
- Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) wide
- Freely Associated States (Micronesia, Marshalls and Palau) wide
- Former Trust Territory (Marianas, Micronesia, Marshalls and Palau) wide

The single Habele program I find most compelling is

- Tuition Scholarships
- Book donations for young children
- Tools for traditional carvers
- Library book donations
- High School robotics
- Support for traditional weavers

Given limited resources, Habele should

- Serve a smaller number of students with more and richer services
- Serve a larger number of students with fewer and less intensive services

Aside from education, the two issues of most concern to me in or of Micronesia are

- Climate Change and Environmental
- Plight of Micronesian Migrants
- Development of Civil Society in Micronesia
- Traditional / Cultural Preservation
- Chinese Influence in Micronesia
- Economic Development in Micronesia
- Opportunities for Girls and Women
- Healthcare within Micronesia

Habele posts about its work online. Do you, or would you keep up with Habele through

- Habele's Facebook pages
- Habele's blog and website

Continued on next page

Understanding nonprofit effectiveness is important for setting and achieving Habele’s goals. But there is tremendous debate about what it means to be an exceptionally effective nonprofit. Which of the definitions of nonprofit effectiveness do you find most compelling?

___ Effectiveness is responsiveness to the shared values that motivate funders, implementers and beneficiaries; this is effectiveness understood as an ongoing and broad stakeholder judgment.

___ Effectiveness is responsiveness to the needs and expectations of beneficiaries; this is effectiveness understood as an ongoing end-user judgment.

___ Effectiveness is financial advancement; this is effectiveness understood as growth and diversification in revenues of the organization, ensuring an ongoing ability to seize opportunities to meet its mission.

___ Effectiveness as operational efficiency; this is effectiveness understood as doing the right thing well in pursuit of the mission, with results that are adequate in proportion to the cost of the effort.

___ Nonprofit effectiveness is best described as a “know it when I see it” quality.

Who do you know that might be interested in donating, volunteering or partnering with Habele but may not yet be on our radar?

How could Habele improve?

Thank you. Please mail to 701 Gervais Street, Suite 150-244 Columbia SC 29201, email a scanned copy to contact@habele.org, or text photos of the survey to 803-586-2358





SCHOLARSHIPS
ROBOTS
BOOKS
TRADITIONAL SKILLS



Habele

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Established by returned Peace Corps Volunteers in 2006