



## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**For more information, contact:**

Jonas Macapinlac  
Director of Integrated Marketing Communications  
University of Guam  
Tel: (671) 735-2944  
Cell: (671) 787-1010  
Email: [jmac@triton.uog.edu](mailto:jmac@triton.uog.edu)

### **Water research institute at University of Guam rated top 12 in nation by U.S. Geological Survey**

The Water and Environmental Research Institute of the Western Pacific at University of Guam is one of 12 institutes out of 54 federally authorized water research institutes in the nation to receive the U.S. Geological Survey's top rating of "outstanding" in its latest five-year evaluation.

A panel evaluated the activities of WERI from fiscal years 2011 to 2015 and reported that WERI continues to serve an important role in the region, strategically managing its activities and significantly impacting public policy and water management through its research, training, education, and public outreach activities.

"WERI's mission is to provide trustworthy and timely scientific advice to the region's professional communities, public agencies, policymakers, and educators for sound, scientifically informed management of our region's freshwater resources. This rating is a welcome acknowledgement that we are doing our job," said WERI Director John W. Jenson.

The evaluation was conducted to determine WERI's continued eligibility to receive an annual grant of \$375,000 from the Water Resources Research Act Program administered by the USGS. WERI has consistently been rated "outstanding" for the past 25 years.

WERI conducts research related to freshwater resource development and management and is the main provider of water testing for public, private, and governmental sectors across Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. It

also performs public outreach, including tours of the aquifer for policymakers and educators, and is a central supporter of the University of Guam's environmental science master's program.

The panel also commended WERI for its use of community advisory councils and its engagement with other groups to advance water science on the islands. The panel noted that WERI actively collaborates with the U.S. Geological Survey, Guam Waterworks Authority, Guam Environmental Protection Agency, Naval Facilities Command Marianas, and other local, regional, and federal agencies throughout the region to provide reliable research, advice, and training on water-related interests.

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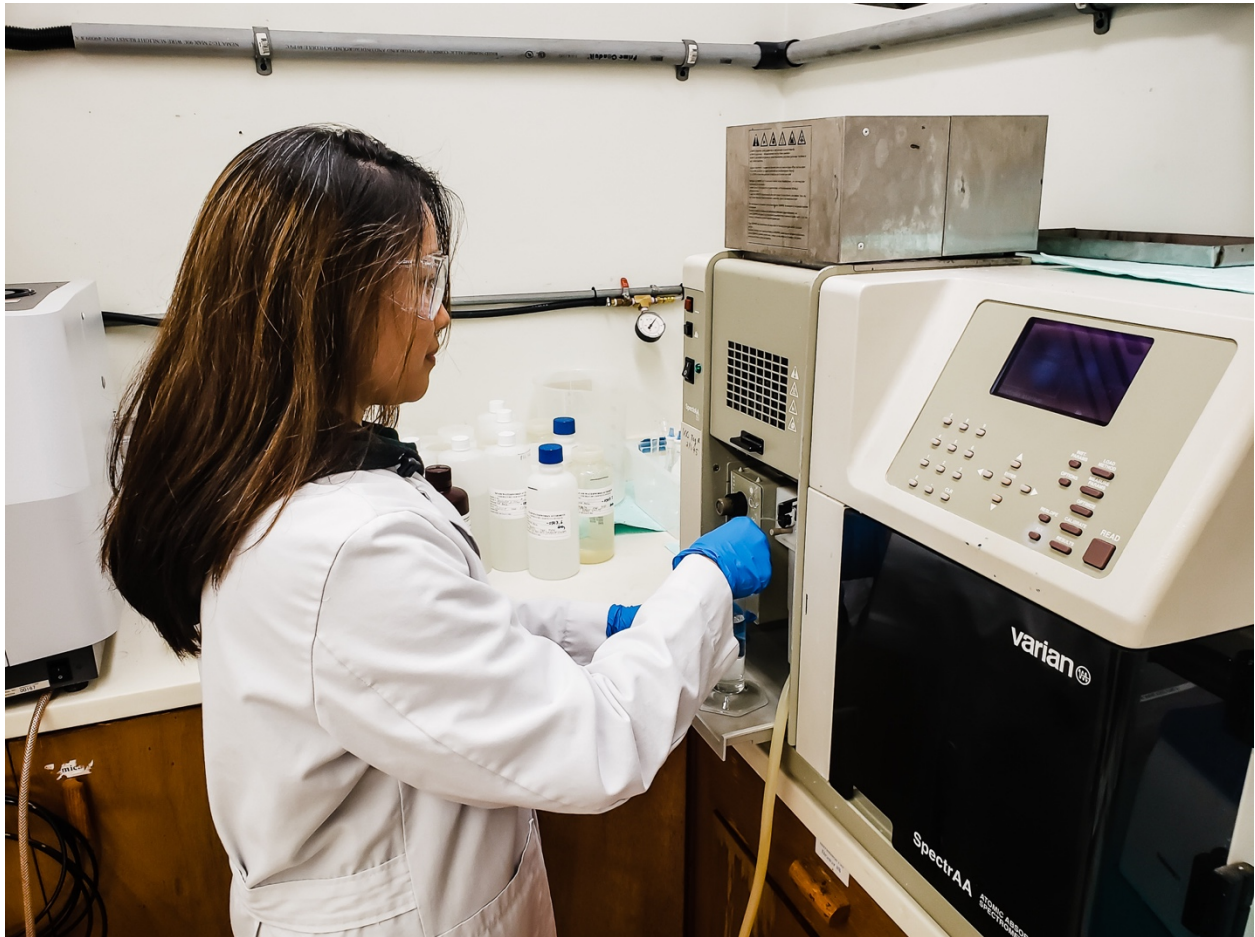
**Photo caption:**



*2020-weri-team*

(From left) Lourdes Mafnas, research assistant II; Gema Payumo, administrative assistant; Kaylyn Bautista, research associate; Jhonnie Villareal, research assistant II; Lyuqin Liu, research assistant II; Jennifer Cruz, laboratory manager; Daniel Superales, research assistant II; John W. Jenson, director; Matthew Ziobro, research assistant I; Yong Sang "Barry" Kim, assistant professor; Yuming Wen, associate professor; Anthony

Agustin, word processing secretary II; Mallery Duenas, chemist II; and Crispina Tagudin, laboratory technician.



*2020-weri-lab-staff*

A lab assistant at the UOG Water and Environmental Research Institute tests a water sample using an atomic absorption spectrophotometer, an analytical instrument used to test lead in drinking water.





*2019-weri-facility*

The Water and Environmental Research Institute of the Western Pacific, located on the University of Guam campus, was one of 12 of 54 institutes nationwide to be rated “outstanding” by the U.S. Geological Survey.

*Photos courtesy of University of Guam*