



**Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities Agency
Guam Masters Award – “Guam National Treasure”
For Heritage Arts Nomination Packet 2026**

I. GUAM MASTERS AWARD - "GUAM NATIONAL TREASURE"

The Guam Masters Award - "Guam National Treasure," created through Public Law 30-139, was established to recognize master practitioners of Guam's Heritage Arts. To honor and preserve Guam's indigenous cultural heritage, the Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities Agency (CAHA) awards the Guam Masters Award - "Guam National Treasure" once every four (4) years to master traditional artists.

This award gives due recognition to master practitioners for their artistry, craftsmanship, and their continuing efforts to preserve Guam's rich history and cultural traditions through the practice and perpetuation of their arts. It acknowledges artists whose contributions, primarily through teaching, advocacy, organizing, and preservation of important artistic practices, have greatly benefited their artistic tradition and significantly increased public visibility and opportunities for heritage arts.

A. HERITAGE ARTS

Heritage arts refer to aspects of learned behavior (culture) that are transferred through word of mouth and/or by following an example set within CHamoru cultural practices. These arts are learned from family or community members and passed through generations, with each artist remaining true to time-honored methods while contributing personal creativity to the process. These artists are highly trained, and it is this manner of training and transmission that earns them the designation of Guam Master.

CHamoru heritage arts are artistic expressions that can be traced through the rich history and culture of the people of Guam and the Mariana Islands. They reflect values such as Ageftao (to be giving) and Afa'maolek (to make things good), connections to nature, and the use of natural resources of the Mariana Islands. These arts preserve cultural meaning while allowing for continued evolution and global expression.

B. HERITAGE ARTS DISCIPLINES

Previous recipients of Heritage Arts include the following areas of recognition:

- *Attestan Tatu (Tattoo Artist)*
- *Bai/adotldora CHamoru (CHamoru Dancer)*
- *Botdadotldora Ga/aide' (Canoe Carver)*
- *Danderu/a (Musician)*

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- *E'estoria (Storyteller)*
- *Espiriton A'amte (Spiritual Healer)*
- *Esteladotldora Aguayente (Distilled Liquor Maker)*
- *Fafamffok Nasa (Shrimp Trap Maker)*
- *Fafa'tinas Bilen (Nativity Maker)*
- *Fafa'tinas/Hugandera/u Bilembaotuyan Bilembaotuyan Maker/Instrumentalist)*
- *Fafa'tinas Karetayon (Bui/cart Builder/Maker)*
- *Fafa'tinas Talaya (Net/fish Maker)*
- *Fafa'tinas Okkodu (Trap Maker) Guagua/o' (Farmer)*
- *Habonerula (Soap Maker)*
- *Hatsadotldora Ho/non Antigu (Outside Oven Builder) Hereru (Blacksmith)*
- *Huganduyan Musika (Musical Instrumentalist)*
- *Kakahat Sagual/e' (Hut Builder)*
- *Kan/an CHamorita (CHamorita Singer/Singers) Kostureralu (Dress Maker)*
- *Lasasgue' (Carver)*
- *Lasasgue' Ifet (Ifet Wood Carver)*
- *Lancheru/a (Rancher)*
- *Lalalai CHamoru (CHamoru Chanter)*
- *Manlasgue' Adotnon I Tataotao (Carver of Body Ornamentation) Nabahadotldora (Knife Maker)*
- *Peskadotldora Ayuyu (Coconut Crab Hunter)*
- *Peskadotldora Binadu (Deer Trapper/Hunter)*
- *Peskadotldora Fanihi (Fruit Bat Catcher/Hunter)*
- *Peskadotldora Haggan (Turtle Catcher/Hunter)*
- *Plateru (Goldsmith)*
- *Rinikohidotldadoran Kotturan CHamoru (Collector of CHamoru Culture) Salinerula (Salt Maker)*
- *Sapaterula (Shoe Maker)*
- *Suruhanu/na (Traditional Healer)*
- *Talayeru/yera (Net/fisher folk)*
- *Talayeron Maflahak (Juvenile Rabbit Fish Net Fisher folk)*

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- *Techa (Prayer Leader)*
- *Titiffok (Weaver)*
- *Titiffok Akgak (Pandanus Weaver)*
- *Titiffok Hagon Niyok (Coconut Palm Weaver)*
- *Tuberu/a (Tuba Maker)*
- *Yo'amte (Healer)*

C. HERITAGE ARTS ARE

- i. Living traditional practices and knowledge passed down over time and through generations.
- ii. Inspired by life in the Mariana Islands.
- iii. Learned informally through observation, imitation, and oral transmission.
- iv. Reflect traditional practices while allowing expression of evolving cultural ideas.
- v. Usually anonymous in origin.

D. HERITAGE ARTS ARE NOT:

- i. Learned primarily through formal classes, books, social media, or magazines.
- ii. Practices retained by individuals who do not pass them on to others.

II. ELIGIBILITY

- A. Nominees must be permanent residents of Guam with a record of continuing artistic accomplishment.
- B. Nominees must actively participate in their art form as apprentice, practitioner, or teacher.
- C. Nominees must have a minimum of twenty (20) consecutive years of active practice in their discipline.
- D. Nominees must have made significant contributions to their artistic tradition.
- E. Nominees must have increased public visibility and opportunities for traditional arts.
- F. Nominees must identify and have support from a minimum of five (5) apprentices or trainees.
- G. Nominees may be recommended by individuals or organizations; however, formal nomination must be made by a recognized Master. If no Master exists within a discipline, any Master may endorse a nominee provided all eligibility requirements are met.
- H. Nominees must reflect CHamoru cultural values of U Gairespetu, U Gaikonsensia, and U Adahi, and demonstrate good moral character.
- I. Nominees should be able to present themselves in the CHamoru language during interviews.

III. HOW TO SUBMIT A NOMINATION

- A. A recognized MASTER of the relevant discipline must serve as the primary nominator.



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- B. Masters may submit one or more nominations per award cycle.
- C. Self-nominations are not permitted; however, recommendations may be submitted to Masters or CAHA staff.
- D. All support materials become property of CAHA unless the nominee is not selected and formally requests their return.
- E. Posthumous nominations will not be considered.

IV. NOMINATION REQUIREMENTS

- A. Nomination submissions must not exceed twenty (20) pages in length.
- B. Nominations may be submitted by hand or typed. Handwritten submissions must be printed (not cursive) and clearly legible.
- C. Submissions may be in CHamoru or English. Bilingual submissions will not be accepted.
- D. Each submission must include:
 - i. An 8 x 10 color photo of the nominee (may be part of the page count)
 - ii. Proof of twenty (20) or more years of practice
 - iii. Evidence of apprenticeship (letters, photos, documentation, or other supporting materials)
 - iv. Confirmation of at least five (5) apprentices or trainees
 - v. Statement of cultural contribution and impact

Note: AI-generated content will not be accepted.

E. FORMAT OPTIONS

- i. Written Submission
 - a. Maximum twenty (20) pages
 - b. Includes photo and supporting documentation
- ii. Video Submission (5-7 minutes)
 - a. Nominee must appear throughout the entire video
 - b. May serve as official photo submission
 - c. Must demonstrate practice, apprentices, and cultural transmission
- iii. Audio Submission (5-7 minutes)
 - a. Voice of nominee must be present throughout
 - b. Apprentices may be included for verification
 - c. Separate 8 x 10 photo required



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V. INTERVIEW REQUIREMENTS

- A. All nominees must be present 15-30 minutes prior to scheduled interviews. Tardiness will be considered in evaluation.
- B. Interview responses should address:
 - i. Personal background and cultural philosophy
 - ii. History and development of practice
 - iii. Mentors and apprenticeship lineage
 - iv. Community impact and contributions
 - v. Years of practice and continuation of discipline
 - vi. Reasons for seeking Master designation
 - vii. Additional supporting information

VI. REVIEW OF NOMINATIONS

The nomination period **opens on Friday, June 12, 2026 and closes on Friday, August 28, 2026.**

Submissions will be received and time-stamped at the CAHA office no later than 4:00 pm, Friday, August 28, 2026. Incomplete submissions will not proceed to review.

A five-member review panel will be convened. All members must be proficient CHamoru speakers and will conduct nominee interviews in the CHamoru language. The panel may or may not include the following individuals:

- Department of CHamoru Affairs
- Commission on CHamoru Language and the Teaching of History and Culture
- Mayors Council of Guam
- University of Guam CHamoru Studies Program
- Recognized Guam Masters

The panel will conduct interviews in CHamoru where possible.

Within forty-five (45) days after the close of submissions, the panel will recommend four (4) nominees for Master designation.

The list of four (4) nominees will be submitted to the Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities (CAHA) board of directors for approval and ratification at their board meeting.

The CAHA board will certify that the nomination process was followed and that the nominee meets the



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criteria described. Final approval will be made by the CAHA Board of Directors.

Announcement and recognition will take place during Arts and Humanities Month in October 2026.

VII. CHECKLIST

A. Eligibility Verification (Must Be Confirmed Prior to Submission)

1.	Nominee is a permanent resident of Guam
2.	Nominee has a minimum of twenty (20) consecutive years of practice
3.	Nominee actively participate as a practitioner, apprentice or teacher
4.	Nominee has at least <i>five</i> (5) identified apprentices or trainees
5.	Nominee demonstrate contribution to preservation of heritage arts
6.	Nominee meets CHamoru cultural values and moral character standards
7.	Nominee is supported by a recognized Master (or approved substitute if applicable)
8.	Nominee is not a posthumous candidate

B. Submission Requirements

1.	Nomination submission included is in the following format. (Checkmark appropriate format box):				
	Written		Video		Audio
2.	Nomination signed by recognized CAHA MASTER who officially nominated the applicant				
3.	Submission time-stamped at CAHA Office				
4.	Required photo included (if applicable)				
5.	Supporting documentation provided				