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15 GCC boot camp grads hired by DPW, Kloppenburg

JOLENE TOVES | THE GUAM DAILY POST

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GRADUATES: There were 15 graduates of the Guam Community College Bus Driver Work-Ready Boot Camp. Those graduates have jobs with the Department of Labor and Kloppenburg Enterprises Inc. Photo courtesy Dan Quinata, DPW school bus operations superintendent

Guam Department of Education students have sometimes been late getting to school or home over the years because of a shortage of school buses and bus drivers - but at least half of that equation will get some much-needed help soon.

There are 15 Guamanians who recently completed the Guam Community College Bus Driver Work-Ready Boot Camp, and of those, 10 will soon get behind the wheel of a Department of Public Works school bus, Deputy Director Linda Ibanez said in a press release.

“Ten passed under DPW organization and are currently being profiled by (the Department of Administration) for qualifications, police and court clearances, and drug testing,” Ibanez said.



Ibanez said the department has 91 active bus drivers on its staffing pattern, which is less than half of the 189 bus drivers needed. However, the addition of the 10 bus drivers means more buses can hit the road. At the start of this last school year, DPW had 88 bus drivers on the payroll, not enough to be able to roll out the 130 operable buses.

The shortage of bus drivers subsequently led to delays in transportation of 8,200 GDOE students to and from schools, officials have said. It also led to hectic schedules for bus drivers, who were trying to cover routes for public, private and charter school students across the island.

15 grads

Guam Community College announced that out of 23 participants who began the program, 15 students saw the program through to the end, graduating from the Bus Driver Boot Camp on June 11.

All 15 graduates took the exam for their Class "D" license and passed their tests, according to GCC's press release. The Class "D" License is a chauffeur license with the "D" endorsement allowing for the operation of 15- to 90-passenger vehicles, including school buses and tour buses.

The island's first Bus Driver Work-Ready Boot Camp was a partnership between GCC, Guam Department of Labor, DPW and Kloppenburg Enterprises Inc. It began in February 2022.

"After successful completion of this boot camp, completers were hired by DPW and KEI. Those hired by DPW are already earning a paycheck through the Guam Department of Labor and will eventually transition to limited-term employees. The KEI participants are also employed as bus drivers and dispatchers," the release said.

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