

Local perception of US military buildup in Guam

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University of Guam assistant professor Amy Owen and her students recently completed a research project on the perception of local residents regarding the U.S. Military Buildup in Guam and related immigration issues.

"The goal of the study was to objectively gather an accurate representation of local views regarding the Buildup," said Owen. "Out of 403 participants, and a 95% confidence level, our results show that 71% of residents perceive the Buildup as good for the economy while 74% perceive the buildup as bad for the culture."

Owen is a cultural geographer and specializes in studying the ways language, religion, the economy, government, and other cultural phenomena vary or remain constant across or between specific areas. The research project entitled, "Guam Culture, Immigration and the US Military Buildup", examines in detail a variety of factors and responses including:

- 53% of respondents overall view the buildup as positive; 41% disagreed that Buildup is positive
- Results show less positivity with anonymous, private disclosure than previous polls were showing
- 78 percent of participants are military or military families

- Middle age group most positive, youngest and oldest least positive
- Youth are concerned about jobs, land takings, cultural and identity loss
- Higher incomes and lowest incomes most positive, middle income least positive
- Of the 403 respondents, 41% are Chamorro, 28% are Filipino, 9% are other Pacific Islanders, and 5% are Asians

"Our research also shows that Guam's culture, though very diverse, is unified and very tolerant of other ethnicities. There is remarkable uniformity across ethnicities in viewpoints and opinions on a variety of topics as they relate to the Buildup. The research results also indicated that the concern of local residents regarding immigrants is not ethnic - it is economic at base (infrastructure, job competition, taking health and other resources)."

Owen and her students will present additional details and analyses of their research outcomes during a presentation on April 27, 2010. The research manuscript was submitted to the peer reviewed journal *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* in February 2010.

Provided by University of Guam

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