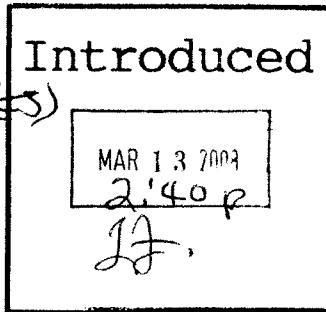


**MINA'BENTE NUEBI NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN**  
**2008 (SECOND) Regular Session**

Legislative  
Resolution No.

132(25)

(65)



Introduced by:

Edward J.B. Calvo  
Frank F. Blas, Jr.  
Ray Tenorio

**Relative to congratulating Ms. Laura-Lynn Dacanay, Senior Vice President/Guam and CNMI Region Manager, *First Hawaiian Bank (Guam)* within our islands distinguished small business community awarded the 2008 Financial Services Champion of the Year.**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY I MINA' NUEBE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN:**

**WHEREAS,** Ms. Laura-Lynn Viegas was born to George and Grace Viegas in San Jose, California and grew up on Guam. She attributes her life's lessons - the meaning of hard work, the need to show initiative, not to expect something by doing nothing, and helping one another is the best and easiest way to accomplish one's goals to her parents; and

**WHEREAS,** in the early 1970's, during summer break, Ms. Laura-Lynn Viegas accompanied her mother who worked as a loan officer for a local credit union with three (3) naval bases to service. Some could say she was destined to work in the financial industry; and

**WHEREAS,** Ms. Laura-Lynn Viegas worked in the office of the family owned small construction business in 1972 with her mother during the

summer while her brother worked in the field. Her parents at the end of summer paid them minimum wage based on the number of hours worked. They used their earnings for school clothes and supplies for the upcoming school year; and

**WHEREAS,** Ms. Viegas' parents were forced into bankruptcy as the island's economy changed and construction projects were sparse and they experienced the affects of having to start all over again. Undeterred, the family persevered and started a cabinet shop retrofitting the kitchen cabinets on the military bases – Ms. Viegas, her brother and cousins provided the labor. It was then she started to save money and sew her own clothes; and

**WHEREAS,** by the time Ms. Viegas was a senior in high school, she cross-enrolled part-time as a freshman at the University of Guam using the money she saved to pay for tuition. She graduated from John F. Kennedy High School in 1978 and worked two (2) jobs as a cashier and front desk clerk and continued to attend college on a part-time basis; and

**WHEREAS,** Ms. Laura-Lynn Viegas started her career in banking as a telephone switchboard and telex operator at The Chase Manhattan Bank, N.A. who eventually sold to California Overseas Bank in 1981. She worked her way through the different departments of the bank assisting them with their workload all with the attitude that the knowledge she gained by helping would be hers to keep. Ms. Viegas by this time was pregnant,

married, in an abusive relationship, a battered wife and new parent. She then filed for divorce in late 1981 and slowed down her studies to one (1) course at college, working full-time to support her small family; and

**WHEREAS**, having been taught another lesson by her father about initiative and expectation, Ms. Dacanay continued to climb up in the ranks of banking. She joined another company in 1984 as a loan officer working to become the loan manager in 1986. She left in 1991 for a brief stint as an escrow officer and 1031-exchange facilitator and returned to finance six (6) months later when she joined the First Hawaiian family as their assistant branch manager of their finance company, First Hawaiian Creditcorp; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Dacanay became the manager in 1992 and was promoted to assistant vice president in 1996, the same year she graduates from college. Creditcorp merged into "*First Hawaiian Bank*" in June 1998 where Ms. Dacanay managed their residential mortgage department with three (3) long service employees of the bank. She was told by the previous manager she would never get the employees to change and the bank already had a reputation for taking too long to process loans, sometimes up to six (6) months. In just two (2) months, with the same staff, Ms. Dacanay was able to turn the processing time around to 28 days; and

**WHEREAS**, at the same time, Ms. Dacanay drove the residential funding to over Eight million dollars (\$8,000,000.00) for the region a new benchmark for "*First Hawaiian Bank's*" residential mortgage bookings in

one (1) month. This also demonstrated to the company how Ms. Dacanay operates and does not hesitate to roll up her sleeves and dive in with her team to accomplish their goals. Her work ethic effectuated being moved around to different areas of the bank, depending on what needed to be reorganized to run more efficiently and was again promoted in 1999 to vice president; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Laura-Lynn Dacanay's then reorganized the entire commercial banking department overseeing the private banking segment, the bank's top tier of customers, and was promoted to private banking and commercial team leader of the business-banking center in April 2000. She and her team of bankers worked diligently restructuring loans and staying in touch with their business customers during the downturn of the island's economy when many of the commercial loans at the bank were downgraded because of either insufficient loan to values or debt service ratios. This team effort resulted in stronger business relationships in the long run for "*First Hawaiian Bank*;" and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Dacanay lead the team on Guam in the successful acquisition of Union Bank of California's Guam and Saipan operations in mid-2001 conducting due diligence on the loan purchases and retaining the jobs of over 30 of their employees who transferred to "*First Hawaiian Bank*." The acquisition allowed "*First Hawaiian Bank*" to establish its second branch in Saipan in the business district of Oleai. Ms. Dacanay coordinated

the acquisition efforts with the key staff to ensure that all customers would have a smooth transition, reaching out to all the business customers in particular with individual banker contract. This extra touch gave the small business community the peace of mind that their business could continue to operate smoothly without any interruptions on the banking side due to the acquisition; and

**WHEREAS,** *"First Hawaiian Bank's "* faced the challenge of establishing more than two (2) branches by a non-local bank and prevented the bank from retaining the Union Bank of Guam branches due to restrictions in Guam laws which also applied to off-site AM's that were defined as branches. Ms. Laura-Lynn Dacanay pursued *"First Hawaiian Bank's"* challenge in court which paved the way for the opening of the Tamuning office of *"First Hawaiian Bank"* at the former Union Bank site six (6) months after the acquisition and opening nine (9) off-site ATM's on Guam; and

**WHEREAS,** by January 2002, Ms. Dacanay became the manager of the largest branch on Guam, the *"First Hawaiian "* Maite Banking Center establishing a strong personal banking platform with dedicated bankers to assist their consumer customers. Ms. Dacanay sought new ways to assist the growing number of small businesses with their banking needs when the island's economy improved in 2006. She implemented changes to staffing and established a full-time dedicated personal banker for small

businesses and coordinated the efforts with the loan center at the bank's main offices to support the new position which has assisted "*First Hawaiian Bank*" reaching its small business segment more effectively; and

**WHEREAS**, much of what Ms. Dacanay has done in the past few years were deemed as part of the responsibilities of the job she was assuming and considered on the job training for her. Despite the title she holds, Ms. Dacanay finds the time to reach out to the small business owners. Customers of "*First Hawaiian Bank*" find it refreshing to be able to talk to the top-level executive without feeling intimidated. This is part of what has attributed to the substantial growth for "*First Hawaiian Bank*" over the past year and a half since Ms. Dacanay became region manager.; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Laura-Lyn Dacanay's success would not have been possible without the love and support from her husband and daughter and the guidance of her parents throughout her life. She married Henry Dacanay and has one (1) daughter, Melanie. Ms. Dacanay and her husband own and operate a small business renting party equipment, starting as a one-man operation in 1989 and now with a staff of nine (9).

**WHEREAS**, Laura-Lynn and Henry Dacanay's daughter, graduated from two (2) culinary schools and works with her father in the office learning the administrative side of the business. As a strong advocate for small businesses, Ms. Dacanay's legacy continues - Melanie also has a

small business of her own, as a personal chef, with the encouragement of her parents, and some good financial advise from her mom; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Laura-Lynn Dacanay is the chairperson for the Guam Chamber of Commerce and chairs the Family Selection Committee for the Habitat for Humanity. She is an advisor on the Strategic Economic Development Council in Saipan, Guam Visitors Bureau's 5-Year Strategic Plan Task Force, the USO Advisory Council, and Anderson Civilian Advisory Council. Ms. Dacanay holds membership in the Guam Hotel & Restaurant Association and the Guam Board of Realtors Association; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Laura-Lynn Dacanay's first banking job that allowed her to further her knowledge of banking in so many areas - assisting departments by continually asking questions to understand not only what she was doing but also why she was doing it. Her can-do attitude has taken the young, former battered wife, then single parent, to rise up against all odds and become an inspiration to those who have had a chance to work with her; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Laura-Lynn Dacanay has moved up in the banking industry starting her career as a telephone switchboard and telex operator with absolutely no knowledge of banking, to running the largest banking operation on Guam. From her humble beginnings, which included being taught several valuable lessons while growing up, Ms. Laura-Lynn

Dacanay has continued to meet every challenge that she has encountered; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Laura-Lynn Dacanay now manages “*First Hawaiian Bank’s*” Guam and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) branches, a position she has held since July 2006 and was promoted to senior vice president in December 2006, no surprise to the staff or our island community; and, now therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the members of *I Mina’ Bente Nuebe Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* congratulate Ms. Laura-Lynn Dacanay, Senior Vice President/Guam and CNMI Region Manager, “*First Hawaiian Bank (Guam)*” within our islands distinguished small business community awarded the 2008 Financial Services Champion of the Year and further extend to her a sincere *Un Dangklo Na Si Yu'os Ma'åse'* for the outstanding contributions she has made for the betterment of our Island Community; and, be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Speaker certify, and the Secretary of the Legislature attests to, the adoption hereof and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to Ms. Laura-Lynn Dacanay and to the Honorable Felix P. Camacho, *I Maga’lahen Guåhan*.

**DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY I MINA’ BENTE NUEBE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THE \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2008.**



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**RAY TENORIO**  
Acting Speaker

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**JESSE A. LUJAN**  
Senator and  
Secretary of the Legislature