

MICRONESIA

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I became more patient and didn't get so upset when things didn't work out."

In addition to living with strange insects, Marie, who helped her counterpart create a system of storing historical artifacts on the island of Palau, said she had to overcome local residents' hostility toward outsiders and completely new living and working conditions.

Though she had read everything she could find about Palau, Marie said she was surprised by the local residents' coolness toward outsiders.

"People wouldn't smile or say hello in the store," Marie said. "It was an awakening for me. They were used to people passing through their culture like rude tourists, taking away and not giving back."

Time and patience helped her overcome local hostility, but some local habits, such as officials sitting on the floor and picking their toenails during meetings, were hard to get used to, Marie said.

Most of the people also chew betel nut, a slightly narcotic fruit gathered from palm trees, Marie said.

"They're spitting this red juice all the time, and the older people have dark red, almost black teeth from the betel juice," Marie said. "You get used to all this, and it just becomes part of your life."

Marie also had to adjust to paper rotting away in the tropical climate and taking showers with water collected off the roof of her house.

"My roof had catchments that collected the water during rainstorms," Marie said. "The water would run through a fine net to filter out the bigger bugs, and we'd use it for washing."

Another intern worked to solve problems on the dark side of paradise.

Jeanne Block, who designed a drug and alcohol abuse education program for the island of Yap, said many Microne-

sians have alcohol or other drug problems.

"In the outer islands people sniff paint or gas, but on Yap the drug of choice is beer," Block said.

When the ship bringing the island's supply of beer is late, many people frantically call stores or their friends, searching for beer to drink, Block said.

Block said she believes many of Yap's problems with drugs and alcohol are rooted in the United States' introduction of Western culture on the island, which disrupted traditional island culture.

"We couldn't be preachy because many of these children's parents use alcohol or drugs," Block said. "We just wanted to educate them on the physical and social consequences of substance abuse."

Block, who is a registered nurse, said Yap's medical system has no freezers for blood storage, but the people have solved the problem of providing blood for patients undergoing surgery — they bring their own blood — on the hoof.

"The first surgery I attended was held up for three hours because the patient's blood donors were late, but they eventually showed up, and the surgery was performed," Block said.

All of the interns said the Micronesia Program helped them become aware of other culture's traditions and perspectives. Marie said her experience changed the way she looks at the United States.

"When I first got to Palau, I made a list of all the things I missed from America," Marie said. "I was counting the days until I could go back home, but now I'm not the same person I was before, and leaving the island felt like leaving home."

Though she doesn't miss the insects, Marie said she would happily deal with them to return to Palau.

"After my friends there, I miss the rainstorms the most," she said. "They are so intense and beautiful."



Photo by Dylan Coulter
Maradel Gale, the University's Micronesia Program director, said the interns need maturity and patience to adjust to Micronesia's many island cultures and climates.



Photo by Damian McLean
Language instructor Jeff Magoto guides foreign language students through an English tutorial computer program.

YAMADA

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and converse with other students via headphone. Using the LCD panel and its buttons, students can quiz themselves on grammar and vocabulary while a speaker asks questions over the headphone.

In addition to using the lab on his own time, Mah's Chinese II class spends two hours a week in the lab.

Instructor and graduate teaching fellow Wei Deng sits before a large computer console. She wears headphones similar to her students'.

By touching a button on the computer, Deng can listen in on individual students. She can play a recorded quiz for students and print out the results for each student and the class as a whole.

Deng said the computer makes it possible to spread her time among many students. In addition, the computer also allows her to pair students up with one another for conversation practice.

Brenda Tunnock, managing director of the center, said

many students are unaware the center installed a satellite dish in the fall. This means students can drop in during the day to watch foreign news programs or check out video copies of the broadcasts to watch in their homes.

"The Chinese broadcasts are pretty hot," Tunnock said. "Chinese students come in pretty regularly to watch news from home."

Tunnock said the center tapes satellite broadcasts almost continuously from 8:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. and plans to start taping through the night.

A large portion of students using the Yamada center are exchange students who learn English as a second language, said Jeff Magoto, an instructor at the center.

Magoto leads students through English-tutorial programs once a week via Macintosh computers.

"From our experience, students are more motivated," Magoto said. "The computer's feedback is immediate, whereas a workbook is not as dynamic."

"Our purpose is to make students independent, in terms of language and survival skills at the University, namely computer skills," he said.

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