

Public Affairs Officer, Laila Gillam
Remarks
State Partnership Program
Nevada National Guard Subject Matter Exchange with Samoa Prisons and Corrections
Services.
September 13, 2024

Faafetai Deacon Siasoi for that wonderful word.

Deputy Commissioner Leiataua Samuelu Afamasaga

Members of the Police, Prisons and Corrections Services

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Talofa lava,

It is my privilege to stand before you today and give remarks to conclude this impactful week-long program. I want to take a moment to reflect on the journey we have taken together, the knowledge we have shared, and the bonds we have forged. It has been an enriching experience focused on basic leadership, inmate management techniques, and effective strategies for addressing mental health challenges within the correctional environment.

First and foremost, I would like to extend our sincerest gratitude to the Government of Samoa, and especially the Samoa Prisons and Corrections Services, for their commitment to this vital partnership. Your openness to learn and evolve is a testament to your dedication to improved correctional practices and the welfare of the individuals entrusted to your care. This collaboration is not just about exchanging ideas; it is about mutual growth and progress, and your leadership in these areas has been exemplary.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated team from the Nevada National Guard, Chaplain LTC Tod Brown, MAJ Luis Muruato, SFC Theresa Faoa and SSG Romeo Tiumalu. Your expertise and willingness to share your knowledge has been

invaluable in facilitating this subject matter exchange. The insights and practices you have brought to the table have equipped everyone here with essential tools that will serve you well in your roles moving forward.

To the participants, as we wrap up this week's exchange, I encourage each of you to carry the knowledge and skills you have gained this week into your respective roles. You are not just correctional officers or leaders in your field; you are agents of change. It's about fostering a culture of respect, empathy, and responsibility. As we navigate the complexities of inmate management, let us remember the central role mental health plays in rehabilitation and reintegration into society. The skills you've shared must be implemented with compassion and understanding. I want to thank each of you for your participation, openness, and commitment to enhancing your competencies. Your dedication to personal and professional growth speaks volumes about your character and your desire to make a difference. Let us take the insights and connections we've made this week and apply them in our ongoing efforts.

This program is just the beginning, and the U.S. Governments hope that it serves as a foundation for ongoing collaboration through the State Partnership Program. Together, U.S. and Samoa can continue to build upon this framework, expanding our exchanges and furthering our collective mission of improving correctional practices.

Thank you, and I wish you all the best as you go forward in your important work. Safe travels and take care!

Faafetai lava.