

The Lord remembers us on the isles of the sea, including Guam.

# CHURCH UNDER A



By Grant Williams



Guam is a small island where the Pacific Ocean meets the Philippine Sea. It is a U.S. Territory and my home. It's also home to hundreds of remarkable members of the Church.

When my family moved here in August 2016 as part of the U.S. military, we were overwhelmed with new weather and a new culture, but we also met wonderful people and began to experience the strong presence of the gospel here.

After we adjusted to our new ward for a few weeks, our bishop invited us to attend

the Talofofo Group, located in the village of Talofofo, several miles away from the chapel. Here a group of faithful saints met outside under a canopy each Sunday.

There were many challenges when meeting outside: the heat, dogs, rain, mud, mosquitos, ants, chickens, and so on. Regardless of these challenges, I have never felt the Spirit so strongly before. It reminds me of how the Saints in the time of Joseph Smith met outdoors in open weather, lacking necessities, with many distractions.

I love the scripture 2 Nephi 29:7. It testifies



# CANOPY



## MEET GRANT

**FAVORITE HOBBIES:** reading, folding origami, sketching, and hanging out with his siblings. Also likes to go snorkeling, scuba diving, hiking (called “boonie stomping” on Guam), and runs cross-country at school.

**FAVORITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL:** math, chemistry, and science

**FAMILY:** lives with parents, one sister, and two brothers

**FAVORITE FOOD FROM GUAM:** BBQ pork, chicken *kelaguen* with red rice (a light chicken salad), and *tinaktak* (a ground beef dish)

**GRANT SAYS:** “My favorite local customs are the night markets and festivals. People make food and merchandise by hand to sell at the markets. Villages celebrate different festivals throughout the year, such as the Banana Festival, Mango Festival, and Pepper Festival. Each village celebrates their patron saint with a festival or fiesta, so basically there’s always a party going on somewhere.”



## INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT GUAM

- Guam is located in Micronesia in the western Pacific Ocean.
- A territory of the United States since 1898.
- The largest island in Micronesia—210 square miles (540 km), 30 miles (50 km) long and 4 to 12 miles (6 to 19 km) wide.
- The natives are called *Chamorros*, descendants of Austronesians from Southeast Asia.
- First visited by Ferdinand Magellan in 1521 and still a major stopover point in the Pacific.
- Tropical rainforest climate, with average temperature 86° F (30° C).
- Language: English and Chamorro (the native language).
- Total population: 167,358.



## THE CHURCH IN GUAM

- The Church first came to Guam in 1944 when servicemen fighting in World War II came to the island.
- Number of Church members in Guam: 2,430.
- First Stake, the Barrigada Guam Stake, was created in December 2010 by Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. There are 4 wards on Guam.
- Part of the Micronesia Guam Mission in the Asia North Area.



that Jesus Christ “created all men” and that He remembers those “who are upon the isles of the sea.” To me, this says that His kingdom is everywhere, even down to the smallest island, and that God will bless our efforts in establishing His kingdom. I know that He is looking out for me, and will help me wherever I am.

Throughout my time here and around the local *Chamorros* (indigenous people of Guam), I have learned that everyone has worth and that our Heavenly Father loves

us equally. I come each Sunday to feel the Spirit, learn gospel principles, and make friends in the Talofoto Group. We are able to find peace, strength, and guidance in the time we spend together.

The Saints in the group feel like family, and I love each one of them as my brothers and sisters. **NE**

*The author, 16, lives in Guam.*

