Proclaiming April 30 – May 7, 2017

in Celebration, Recognition and Honor of

**Mental Health Awareness Month**

**WHEREAS,** mental health is essential to the overall health and well being of our island community. Together, we must address the complex mental health needs of our island’s children, youth, adults and families. All Guamanians experience times of difficulty and stress in their lives, and prevention is an effective way to reduce the burden of mental health conditions.

          This year, approximately **one** in **five** Americans—our friends, colleagues, and loved ones—will experience a diagnosable mental health condition like depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, or post-traumatic stress, and many others will be troubled by significant emotional and psychological distress, especially in times of difficulty.

         Our island has made strong advances in improving prevention, increasing early intervention, and expanding treatment of mental illnesses. While these programs have a positive impact on the mental health of our island community, we also are blessed to have a network of support to help us through our most challenging times. As our culture is rooted in family and based on the support we provide one and other, we must provide emotional support and address the mental health needs of our island’s people, together.

         During Mental Health Awareness Month, we recognize the Guamanians who live with mental illness and substance use disorders, and we pledge solidarity with their families who need our support as well. Let us strive to ensure people living with mental health conditions know that they are not alone, that hope exists, and that the possibility of healing and thriving is real. Together, we can help everyone get the support they need to recover as they continue along the journey to get well.

 **Now, Therefore, I, Ray Tenorio,** *I Maga’Låhen Guåhan Para Pago,* Acting Governor of Guam, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Organic Act of Guam, as amended, do hereby proclaim **May 2017** in celebration, recognition and honor of **Mental Health Month.** This month, we renew our commitment to ridding our society of the stigma associated with mental illness, encourage those living with mental health conditions to get the help they need, and reaffirm our pledge to ensure those who need help have access to the support, acceptance, and resources they deserve.

 **IN WITNESS WHEREOF,** I hereby set my hand and cause the Great Seal of Guam to be affixed in the Capital City of *Hagåtña,*on this **Twenty-fourth** day of **April**in the Year of Our Lord, *Anno Domini*, **Two Thousand Seventeen.**