

A Message from Robert Barclay, Author of *Meja!*

In the Summer of 2002 I published a novel, *Meja!*, that humbly attempts to tell the story of a great and peaceful people firmly rooted in the past and present of the Pacific, its atolls, its islands, its spiritual homelands—a great people who have survived and continue to struggle with the horrors of nuclear testing, relocation, Western arrogance and domination. With this novel, it has been my hope to create awareness of these many hardships faced by the Marshallese people, not only in the past, but also which continue to ripple through today. The novel has done well, and with the royalties I received, I created this recently endowed scholarship with the belief that one of the best ways to help the Marshallese people to be better able to help themselves is through higher education.

Recently, I agreed to a deal with Te Maka Productions to produce a film adaptation of the novel, which I hope will further awareness, and as always, all my proceeds from the novel and the film will go directly to the scholarship.

Please read *Meja!* if you can, and please contribute to the scholarship and to the betterment of the Marshallese people. You may visit a website dedicated to the novel at: www.robert-barclay.com

Facts About the Marshall Islands

The Marshall Islands are two archipelagic island chains of 29 atolls, each made up of many small islets, and five single islands in the North Pacific Ocean, about half way between Hawai'i and Australia.

The Marshall Islands attained independence from the US in 1986 under a Compact of Free Association. Compensation claims continue as a result of US nuclear testing on Bikini and Eniwetok atolls between 1947 and 1962.

These Marshallese atolls, and others via contamination from radioactive fallout, suffered from the surface detonation of sixty-six atomic and hydrogen thermonuclear bombs, altogether yielding the equivalent of more than 7,000 Hiroshima bombs.

With 38% of the population under the age of fifteen, a median age of about 20 years, and a 31% unemployment rate, the need for higher education in the Marshall Islands is immediate and paramount.

Support Higher Education in the Marshall Islands

Jepelpelin Ke Ejukān



Iḷkwe Koḃ Kanooj in Ruainene

The Alfred Capelle and Byron Bender Scholarship

A Message from the Marshallese Ambassador to the UN, Alfred Capelle

Globalization has brought with it a variety of challenges, opportunities, and global imbalances in the economic, financial, and trade regimes. As a result, most of the economic and job opportunities tend to favor the developed world, while developing countries such as the Marshall Islands suffer as the gap between the rich and the poor becomes wider.

Properly educated and trained Marshallese citizens would be a significant asset and a tremendous boost to improve the quality of life in the islands, as the students return with their college educations to staff the schools and the various government and civil society positions that will play a role in creating a better future.

The Marshall Islands needs all the well-educated Marshallese citizens it can have to cope with the changes that are taking place in the world. This scholarship, by helping deserving and qualified students in the Marshall Islands receive a solid education at the University of Hawai'i, will no doubt help to address this critical need and bring the Marshall Islands closer to achieving the millennium sustainable development goals.

A Message from UH Regent Byron Bender

I am happy to have my name associated, together with my good friend and co-author Alfred Capelle, with a scholarship that would help young people from the Marshall Islands earn a four-year baccalaureate degree from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

The first Marshallese person to earn a baccalaureate from UH, in 1959, was Dwight Heine. Dwight was the first Marshallese I met when I came to Hawai'i in 1953, when the Director of Education for the Trust Territory was deciding to which district to send me first as the new linguist just hired to write dictionaries and grammars for the island schools. Dwight prevailed upon him to send me to the Marshalls, and that is where I spent the next six years, some of the happiest of my life.

Dwight was a pioneer in establishing a system of public schools in the Marshalls following WWII, and later was the first Marshallese to serve as District Administrator (Governor) for the Marshalls District of the Trust Territory. He was one of four "Great Marshallese" honored by a commemorative stamp issued in 2001. It is my hope that this scholarship may help other Marshallese young people to follow in Dwight's footsteps, serving the people of the islands in creative new ways in the 21st century.

Alfred Capelle and Byron Bender Endowed Scholarship

Robert Barclay, author of *Meja!*, established this scholarship to honor two people who helped him with the novel. Alfred Capelle, former President of the College of the Marshall Islands is the current Marshallese Ambassador to the United Nations. Byron Bender is Emeritus Professor of Linguistics at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and a member of the University's Board of Regents. Capelle and Bender are part of the team, along with Takaji Abo and Tony DeBrum, that co-authored the *Marshallese-English Dictionary*. Mr. Barclay wants to assist students from the Marshall Islands attending UH Mānoa, especially those interested in creative writing.

How You Can Contribute

You may make a credit card donation by visiting the UH Foundation online at www.uhf.hawaii.edu. Select *UHM - Student Affairs* under "Programs," then select *Alfred Capelle and Byron Bender Endowed Scholarship* under "Accounts."

Or send your check, payable to the UH Foundation, with a note specifying the Alfred Capelle and Byron Bender Endowed Scholarship, to: University of Hawai'i Foundation P.O. Box 11270 Honolulu, HI 96828.

Or, if you have the opportunity, you may give the check to Ambassador Capelle. *Kommool tata*, and thank you very much.