

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 276 Will We be Ready for Post-Buildup Guam?

What will Guam be like in 10 years, and how will that impact job and career opportunities? What will the challenges be for HR directors who need to find the right talent? I'm Jerry Roberts and we'll rev up the crystal ball and see what it could be like, not that far down the road. That's next, on The Extra Point.

What will the Guam job market be like in 10 years? This is a lot to chew over in three minutes, but a few ideas have been nagging at me the past couple of weeks, so let's see if I can air them out and make some sense of it.

Imagine it's 2029 in Guam, what do we see? Well, the military buildup is over. Regardless of how much of it we finally got and how many billions of dollars it rained down on Guam — whether all of what was projected or just a fraction of it — it's over.

It's a fair question to ask, what will Guam's economy be like when the long list of big military construction projects get built? Will we, as a community, be in a far better place than we are today, in pre-buildup mode?

As stated, we know that a lot of companies are going to pack up and leave Guam once their projects are completed. What will happen to the housing market? How many restaurants will be able to keep the doors open? What will the job market be like? Will we be able to attract investors to come in and replace those employers who leave, bringing with them high paying jobs that allow people to do more than just make ends meet?

Or will workers who are used to a decent income, then be faced with the choice of accepting a job with lower pay, or leaving Guam for opportunities elsewhere?

Many Baby Boomers will still be working, some because they want to but most because they have to. As for the generations that follow,

Gen X, the Millennials, and Generation Z, will they be happy with their employment prospects, or will they consider moving to the mainland? Every U.S. jobs forecast paints the same picture — there are now and will continue to be millions of good jobs that will not be filled because there aren't enough qualified people. Guam has seen a "brain drain" before, as has Hawaii, where talented workers leave in numbers. Will that happen again? If it does, what will it be like to be an HR manager, scrambling to find better people for their open positions?

You might say, "Well, 10 years is a long time. Why worry about that now?" Think about this, we've been talking about the buildup for nearly 15 years. Time flies.

So what do we do? One answer is to create as much of our future as we can, not just let it happen to us. To a large extent the 2029 Guam economy will be shaped by the efforts of Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero and the people she has charged to attract investment to our island. If her team is aggressive and creative, and if they score some early wins that build momentum for their program, they can set the table for Guam to be able to retain its young talent, and we can all prosper in the post-buildup years to come.

It's not all on the governor, Everyone needs to do their part. Continually expand your skills. If you're a manager, get trained in how to help others improve. If we make the right decisions now and get after them, we'll be in position to harness the future that's headed our way.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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