



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Olympic Values Education Program Reaches Over 762 Students in Kokopo

Team PNG HERO Athletes Inspire Youth to Embrace friendship, Excellence, Respect, and Environmental Sustainability

Kokopo, East New Britain - Over 762 students across four schools in Kokopo participated in the Olympic Values Education Program (OVEP) from November 14–16, 2024. Led by Team PNG HERO athletes, the initiative emphasized the Olympic values of Respect, Excellence, and Friendship, encouraging young people to incorporate these principles into their lives.

HERO athletes Rellie Kaputin, Kele Lessy, and Gantianna Joseph shared personal stories about their journey in sports and how the values guided them to inspire the students of Rabaul International School, Kalamanaganan Primary School, Kokopo Primary and Technical Secondary Schools.

Olympian Rellie Kaputin, a track and field athlete who holds the national record for jumps, multiple medal winner at the Pacific Games, and also represented PNG at the Commonwealth and the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, spoke about the importance of respecting oneself. She highlighted how self-care, discipline, and balance have helped her excel in both sport and life. Kele Lessy, Vice Captain of the PNG Men's Touch Football team, focused on respect for others, illustrating how mutual respect within a team environment has been vital to his growth as an athlete. Gantianna Joseph, a Karate athlete and environmental advocate, discussed respect for the environment, emphasizing the role of youth in reducing plastic pollution under the Love Your Coast program.

The program culminated with a Touch Football Tournament at Kalamanaganan Primary School on November 16, 2024, where 62 students participated. The tournament celebrated teamwork and respect, providing a platform for students to apply the values they had learned. Team PNG HERO athletes also took part in the event, exemplifying the principles they promoted throughout the program.

The Papua New Guinea Olympic Committee, Programs Coordinator, Mickey Tamarua praised the students' enthusiasm and commitment, noting how the values of Respect, Excellence, and Friendship were evident in their actions both during the sessions and on the field. The program's success underscored the dedication of the East New Britain Provincial Government and the PNG Olympic Committee (PNGOC) to empower youth and foster environmental sustainability.

Alongside OVEP, the PNGOC's Love Your Coast initiative advocates for plastic-free practices and clean coastlines, emphasizing the importance of protecting the environment. Building on this success, discussions are underway to expand the program, reaching even more students in East New Britain in the coming years.

The Team PNG HERO Athlete Program, which empowers Papua New Guinea athletes to inspire positive change, through the delivery of the Olympic Values Education Program and

Love Your Coast program, which fosters respect, global citizenship, and continue to leave a lasting impact on communities nationwide. Through programs like Love Your Coast, the PNGOC remains committed to promoting environmental sustainability and encouraging future generations to create meaningful change, and contributing to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

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About the Papua New Guinea Olympic Committee

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The Papua New Guinea Olympic Committee (PNGOC) is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation committed to inspire and unite Papua New Guinea through sporting excellence and success. The PNGOC is a believer of sport as an enabler for sustainable and inclusive development. It is our responsibility to select, send and fund Team PNG to the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games and Pacific Games. This is achieved by working with our member national sports federations and with the support of our sponsors and partners, through fundraising events and with the backing of the Government. To find out more visit our website www.pngolympic.org.pg

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