

Micronesians in Hawaii: Understanding the Newest Immigrant group to Hawaii

Hawaii has had a long history of different immigrant groups arriving on its shores, struggling with living a new land and culture, and eventually becoming accepted parts of the culture of Hawaii. The most recent group of immigrants are those coming from different parts of Micronesia.

Why are they coming to Hawaii? This growing immigration of residents of the islands of Yap, Chuuk, Kosrae and Pohnpei is the result of an agreement between the governments of the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). This agreement allows Micronesians to travel to the U.S., visa free until the year 2024 in exchange for the U.S. military and civilian “exclusive access to the FSM’s territorial waters.” The U.S. has several important military bases in Micronesia, including U.S. missile testing of Kwajelin Island. In return for the use of these military bases, the U.S. government provides economic and financial assistance to FSM residents. Micronesians are moving to Hawaii to obtain medical care, jobs and education for their children. Many Micronesians are here seeking medical treatment for diseases they have contracted as a result of exposure to radiation from U.S. nuclear tests in the 1940s and 50s.

Effects of the Micronesians migration to Hawaii

As a result, some Hawaii residents have a negative view of the Micronesians arriving here, especially those who have lost their jobs because of the current economic downturn. Local residents also see Micronesians making use of our medical facilities and Micronesian children in their public schools.

In Kuhio Park Terrace, where many Micronesians live because they can only afford low income housing find themselves facing much racial prejudice and sometimes physical harm. One of the problems are that Micronesians remain a mystery to Hawaii residents and are “different from us” and fear dictates why “we shouldn’t accept them”. Because Micronesians speak only their language, many small skirmishes and sometimes physical fights result because of inability to communicate with non-Micronesian neighbors. In another incident here in Hawaii, Mayor Wright Housing, a Micronesian was harassed to the point where she filed a petition for a temporary restraining order when her neighbors “tried to kick her and beat her up, and stood outside her door brandishing knives and other weapons. . .”

For Micronesians, fisherman by trade and illiterate, they face much negativism and their climb from the bottom is a tremendous challenge.

After reading the article "Micronesians in Hawaii" answer the following questions:

1. Wh?

2. According to the reading why is the U.S. allowing Micronesians to enter the country?

3. Give 3 reasons why many Micronesians are moving to Hawaii.

A.

B.

C.

3. What are 2 effects of the Micronesians coming to Hawaii?

A.

B.

4. Prejudice is when someone pre- judges someone else without actually knowing them, explain how this is happening to this group of people.

5. Micronesians are living in Hawaii legally, should they be allowed to be here?

Why or why not ?

