

# Letter from PREL's Board Chair



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Claire Tuia Poumele'.

**Dr. Claire Tuia Poumele**  
Director of Education  
American Samoa Department  
of Education

Dear friends and partners,

As you read through the pages of our 2009 Annual Report, you will find an overview of our work in which we highlight evidence of our commitment to building a bridge between educational research and practice. You will also experience the reaffirmation of our unyielding dedication to the contextualization of our work, tending to the needs and cultural diversity of the region we serve.

2009 was a year of challenges, and the loss of our President & Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Tom Barlow, as well as PREL long time collaborator and friend, Dr. Rita H. Inos, were no exceptions. For us, their passing was an invitation for us to reflect on the meaning of their work and honor them by renewing our efforts to strive for educational improvement in the Pacific region and enrich it with the much-needed resources the children of the Pacific deserve.

This past year was also marked by an epic economic downfall, yet, PREL managed to end the year with better than average results. **We kept ourselves on track through fiscal responsibility and the invaluable support and trust of our staff members** who doubled their commitment to PREL and those we serve in the Pacific.

From the hands-on classroom work of the Pacific CHILD project to the ongoing Bridge Event series; from our evaluation partnerships to the assessment work for regional institutions; from library training to assistance with recovery and preservation efforts; from data systems development to its implementation—PREL is as committed as ever to working in the Pacific, where our work makes a difference in the educational systems there and, therefore, in the education that our children receive.

We continuously partner with local educators and community members, making education a community affair, as is evident in our Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRC) in the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

We are proud to promote culturally relevant academic literacy for students of Hawaiian ancestry through *E Ho'omaui!*, our recently



# and Acting President & CEO

awarded grant from the Native Hawaiian Education Program within the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. ED), as well as the National Science Foundation-funded Project MACIMISE that aims to recover mathematical concepts that are culturally relevant for the Pacific region and turn them into curriculum materials.

We are encouraged by the challenges and opportunities that 2010 will bring. In the imminent future, portions of the Pacific will experience landmark transformations in information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure. PREL has long anticipated such changes, and we stand ready to assist SEAs and communities in making the most of these new opportunities on the horizon. After all, our goals at PREL are to prepare children with 21st century skill sets so that they can thrive in the new global economy and to prepare communities for citizenship in a digital world.

We keep strengthening our presence in the Pacific region through our local Service Centers, and we plan in 2010 to continue implementing communication methods that will further our partnerships and diversify our assistance.

Through our Pacific Educators in Residence (PEIR) program, we continue to exchange knowledge with our colleagues from the Pacific. Last year, PEIRs worked in two of our Service Centers, the CNMI and American Samoa, and a third worked in our Honolulu office.

Our different backgrounds and cultures unite us in the pursuit of a world in which no educational opportunity is out of reach for the Pacific child—a world in which they can thrive, while at the same time preserving their values and taking pride in their cultural heritage. Like Rita H. Inos once said, **“Despite change, the fundamental principle underlying the work at PREL remains firm—to honor and value cultural diversity.”**

We thank you, our partners and friends, for another extraordinary year; we look forward to working together to make 2010 even better.



A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Paul Dumas'.

**Mr. Paul Dumas**  
Acting President & CEO  
Pacific Resources for Education  
and Learning