Many schoolchildren are learning the ABCs of tourism, thanks to teachers like Rowena Rafan. Rowena, a teacher at F.B. Leon Guerrero in Yigo, plays a key role in the Tourism Education Council. TEC sponsors the WAVE (Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically) Club Program, which helps students learn about the visitor industry.

As the TEC board member representing schools’ WAVE Clubs, Rowena helped the council participate in the Guam Visitors Bureau’s Tourism Works Poster/Video Contest in May. With TEC Executive Director Heidi Ballendorf, Rowena worked with teachers who are WAVE Club coordinators to make the contest a success. As a liaison between those coordinators and contest organizers, Rowena facilitated participation, which resulted in more than 100 entries.

The contest is one of many WAVE Club activities that help children think about tourism. Other initiatives include field trips to hotels and tree plantings.

For Rowena, seeing the excitement on children’s faces is the best part. “I like the expressions on our WAVE Club members’ faces when they learn new information and how excited they get when they’re participating in an event or field trip,” she says.

Rowena sees benefits in helping Guam’s future leaders learn how the visitor industry has affected the local economy and how it has evolved. “Our children should be exposed early, and the WAVE Club Program allows our members who are in the elementary level to gain that hands-on experience,” she says.

In addition to helping students learn about tourism, Rowena models the Håfa Adai spirit. Leading by example, she greets others with “Håfa Adai” as she passes through her school’s hallways or answers the phone in her classroom.

As Rowena knows, it takes more than a greeting to convey the Håfa Adai spirit. “The Håfa Adai spirit is significant to Guam because it showcases our warmth and generosity to others as they walk through the doors of businesses, schools or even our homes.”

Through her efforts to educate students about the Håfa Adai spirit and tourism, Rowena has shown she is a class act.

LIVING THE HÅFA ADAI PLEDGE
Rowena Rafan

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For more information about WAVE Clubs, call Rowena Rafan at 787-8928.