

# Welcome relief from creative drought

High school and college students took creative art classes, some for the first time, at Majuro schools during the past two weeks.

Artist Valentina Dubasky and her colleague high school English teacher Andrea Piccolo, both from New York City, led the two- and three-day workshops, teaching students how to create a small publications using storyboards, illustrations and writing.

"We start by providing them with lots of visual stimulation, passing out examples of award-winning illustrations that have been published," explained Dubasky to a group of teachers at the College of the Marshall Islands, who were being introduced to the program.

"Then we encourage them to draw on material from the own lives and imagination. This format provides an interesting adjunct to oral history, which has a long tradition in the Marshall Islands," she said.

Dubasky and Piccolo give the students fine art supplies, including acrylic paints, watercolors, brushes and hardboards. "We stay away from crayons and craft materials," they said, emphasizing that their purpose is to expose the students to fine art.

The students are asked to create four panels on storyboards, each representing a page in a publication, which should include writing and illustrations.

## New York teachers bring 'Art in a Box' to Majuro



Teacher Valentina Dubasky pins a painting by a CMI student on the wall.

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The two women run the non-profit organization Art in a Box, and have conducted similar courses in Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia. They teach children concepts such as layout, design, creativity and visual expression.

Art is not included in any curriculum in RMI schools, so this was an intro-

duction to how the subject could be presented to students in a simple and fun exercise.

The Art in a Box sessions were co-sponsored by CMI and Women United Together in the Marshall Islands. WUTMI will exhibit some of the art created by the students later this year at their bi-annual conference.