



FIJI NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

FNUNIKUA

A large photograph of a graduation ceremony. Several graduates in blue gowns and caps are seen from a low angle, looking up and throwing their blue caps into the air. The caps are captured in mid-air, with their tassels trailing. The background shows a clear blue sky with some clouds and palm trees. The overall mood is celebratory and hopeful.

OUR FUTURE LEADERS

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UNIVERSITY RECORDS
INCREASE IN ENROLMENTS

TRIO GRADUATE FROM
SAME VILLAGE

ENGINEERING, SCIENCE &
TECHNOLOGY IS TRANSFORMING
THE WORLD - VC HEALEY

University records increase in enrolments



Students at the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

The Fiji National University (FNU) has recorded a 9 percent increase in enrolments this year following the restructure of its programmes and realignment of the University term from penster and trimester modes to semester.

FNU Chancellor Ikbal Jannif, speaking at the 2018 May graduation ceremony said the planned infrastructure development projects being undertaken at the University will ensure greater access to quality and affordable tertiary education to students across the country.

“We are Fiji’s national university and we carry a great weight of expectations on our shoulders. In the pursuit of meeting those expectations, we are constantly upgrading our learning and teaching facilities,” said Chancellor Jannif.

“The Fijian-Government has expressed its confidence in FNU with a greatly increased operating and capital grant, thus, the University will continue to work closely with them to ensure the students are provided with the best learning and teaching environment.”



“We had a great start to 2018 with the formal opening of the new ‘Na WereLevu’ lecture theatre at our Natabua Campus, a state-of-the-art 670 seater auditorium – a genuinely international class venue, with air-conditioning and advanced audio-visual facilities. I am happy to note that this is one of the largest and most impressive lecture theatres in Fiji,” Jannif added.

The Chancellor said the continuous advancement will ensure that FNU’s programmes achieve its declared aim to produce highly-employable graduates who are from day-one work ready.

The University also has made important progress in strengthening its Information and Communications Technology (ICT). It is now connected to the Australian Academic and Research Network (AARNet). AARNet uses the Southern Cross Cable to connect to North America, with landing points in Suva and Hawaii.

“The future is digital and by connecting directly to the landing station, the University will have a range of benefits including much faster broadband speeds. FNU is uniquely placed in Fiji to offer ‘blended learning.’ We are exploring the possibilities for more flexible learning, with face-to-face contact supported by distance-learning materials,” said Chancellor Jannif.

“We have also established a new Centre of Flexible and E-learning under the office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Learning and Teaching). We are now at the advantage of using new capabilities offered by AARNet to support learning through virtual tutorials and discussion groups, with students and staff working together using video-conferencing. In principle, it may be possible to also offer highly vocational programmes through blended learning to remote communities, who may only have to travel to campus for a few blocks over the course of their study.”

In April this year, FNU signed the project agreement for Labasa Campus construction with Kartikas Construction Plumbing Services Limited. The first phase of the \$30m, state-of-the-art Labasa Campus is expected to be completed and ready for operations in 18 months.

Several sites were considered but the current location was selected due to its close proximity to the Labasa Town Centre and accessibility to public transport.

Phase One will include modern lecture theatres, tutorial and teaching rooms, staff administration offices, computer labs, library and cafeteria. Engineering workshops, gymnasium, student accommodation, dining hall and sports fields will follow in due course.

Jannif said the on the job training component of all FNU courses is what sets this University apart from its competitors.

The University over the years has partnered with various stakeholders to provide the best industrial experiences to all its students.

“I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the invaluable support of the stakeholders in the development of Fiji’s future workforce through student attachments and being actively involved in assisting the University to review the programmes in order keep up with the demands of the industries,” Jannif said.

The University hosted five graduation ceremonies in May where 1,323 students graduated with certificates, diplomas, degrees and post-graduate qualifications. Out of the total number of graduates 51 percent were females.

In May, FNU signed contracts to undertake two important multi-million dollar capital projects. The first was the design of a 8 million dollar Nasinu Sports Complex to be constructed on Nasinu Campus. This facility will consist of cardio training, rehab, cross-fit and weightlifting, circuit machine stations and indoor running for testing and fitness. The state-of-the-art gymnasium will be designed by local company Conway Architects.

The second was the construction of the region’s first Veterinary Hospital Complex at Koronivia Campus. The Government of Fiji has allocated 3 million dollars towards this project. The hospital once complete will consist of isolation wards, dog and cat ward, x-ray room, dental facility, treatment room, prep and store room, surgery room, six consultation rooms, post mortem facilities, DNA lab, Post PCR lab together with other facilities.

The Chancellor said FNU is committed in its endeavor to achieve its vision of a quality tertiary education provider that is contributing positive economic returns and development to the nation.

Graduation Quotes



Professor Nigel Healey
Vice Chancellor
Fiji National University

Graduates, you have worked hard to see this day. You now stand on the threshold of new opportunities and dreams and the prospect of a bright future with your new qualifications. You are ready to join the workforce and contribute to economic and social development of our nation. Your qualifications are globally recognised and, should you decide to spend part of your career overseas, they will hold you in good stead.

Graduates, you are entering a world in which geographical boundaries have become increasingly meaningless. You will be employed by organisations, deal with clients and suppliers and work with colleagues that come from every part of the world. We live in an integrated global economy, in which information, goods and services, people and capital flow seamlessly across borders.



Professor Nii-K Plange
Pro Vice Chancellor Research (Acting Vice Chancellor)
Fiji National University

You are ready to join the workforce and contribute to the economic and social development of the country. This includes responding to the new challenges of climate change that the country faces and will continue to face in the future.

Indeed, this contribution must extend beyond the requirements of the office, industry or the classroom. Your contribution should also be in your respective communities where you can, selflessly, share your knowledge and skills for the betterment of community life.



Hon Jone Usamate
Minister of Employment, Productivity &
Industrial Relations

Graduates, get a job or create a job but keep investing in your growth, be aware of the changes taking place in your area of speciality, so that you remain relevant.

Be willing to start from the bottom and work your way up. Do not expect to get a fabulous salary right from the outset. There is still a lot you need to learn.

I want you to know also that to my mind the most important ingredient for success will be the ability to persist when times are hard, to not give up, to have grit, to be able to persevere, to constantly look for ways of achieving goals and for better

ways of doing things.

A/ASP Dumukuro completes Masters

It was a proud moment for 46-year-old Eseta Dumukuro, a senior police officer as she received her Executive Masters in Business Administration (EMBA) certificate from the Acting Police Commissioner Rusiate Tudravu.

Dumukuro, who hails from Kedra village, Dogotuki in Macuata, is currently an Acting Assistant Superintendent of Police (A/ASP) based at the Police headquarters in Suva.

She said encouragement from her work colleagues, family and friends at the EMBA programme provided the strength to complete her studies.

“It was certainly a tough three years for me but with prayers and support from all my family and friends, I was able to complete my Masters programme,” said Dumukuro.

“I must thank and acknowledge the leadership at the Fiji Police Force for providing support to officers so we can upgrade our qualifications and use it in our work as well as share it with the rest of our colleagues.”

Dumukuro is currently the Officer in-charge of Crime Statistics and is part of the Fiji Police Force’s Strategic Planning, Policy, Research and Development Division.

Serving at a senior position in the Fiji Police Force isn’t easy and to juggle that with family and meeting other obligations can become a challenge, admitted Dumukuro.

The soft-spoken mother of three believes that discipline, dedication and sacrifice laid the foundation for her to achieve her academic goal.

“It is certainly a huge relief as I stand here today and look back three years ago to the time when I had started this programme. There were many challenges; having to juggle my work, family and studies. But at the end of the day it’s how you as an individual prioritize your to do list and then persevere towards your goals,” said Dumukuro.

“As students, we were challenged in the way we think and perceived things. There was a lot of sharing of knowledge and I certainly learnt a lot during my journey as a student. It was fun and stressful at the same time but it was all worth it in the end. I believe I have come out a lot wiser and the new knowledge that I have acquired is already assisting me in my work.”

Dumukuro, who also delivered the Vote of Thanks on behalf of the graduating students of the College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies, encouraged all the graduates to use their qualifications towards greater productivity and sharing their knowledge with others.

“We have become graduates who will empower society with the knowledge we gained from this prestigious institution. We have now been liberated with the freedom and the information to share and educate society through the work that we do and in the new work places we aspire to be at,” said Dumukuro.

“We now have a huge responsibility on our shoulders, to give back to society, to be citizens who transform and inspire and remain steadfast in this very challenging era.”

Dumukuro encouraged other students, especially those in the workforce, to join the Fiji National University to upgrade their qualifications so they can become more productive as well as grow in their career.



Eseta Dumukuro receives her Executive Masters in Business Administration (EMBA) certificate from the Acting Police Commissioner Rusiate Tudravu.

Chute graduates in Law

It was an exhilarating moment for the pioneer graduate of Bachelor of Laws programme Leona Michelle Panapasa Chute to finally receive her dream qualification after four years of challenges.

The 29-year-old, originally from Fiji but now residing in Auckland, New Zealand enrolled for the programme in 2014 when it was first introduced at the Fiji National University (FNU) under the College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies (CBHTS).

Becoming a lawyer was not always Chute’s dream growing up but this changed as she began to understand more about life.

“Law was not my first choice, I had initially wanted to follow in my mother’s and grandmother’s footsteps and become a teacher, but during those times there were too many teachers and not enough schools, so I changed my mind to become an air hostess like my Auntie Varea, my mum’s younger sister as I loved to travel. Then I saw a law movie and after researching more about law studies, changed my mind and decided to pursue law,” Chute said.

“I told myself that’s what I wanted to do, to be part of life changing decisions that would help a person, family and community. To represent the oppressed, poor and those vulnerable in our society.”

“My inspiration to become a lawyer furthered after reading actual cases and watching documentaries about events that made history.”

She said while it was nerve wrecking to study law, it was also a humbling experience to be creating history as the first batch of law students to graduate from FNU.

“The challenges that I faced was reading the section of laws or cases that were not exciting and were sometimes



Leona Michelle Panapasa Chute with her family members after the graduation ceremony.

very long. The other challenge was some of these laws were written using archaic words which were confusing and hard to understand at times. But at the end, the dedication and passion got us through this programme.”

Chute had to leave her husband, George Chute behind in New Zealand and adjust to campus life at FNU.

“My fond memories of FNU were hostel life, it was there that I made lifelong friends. I also learnt to be independent and appreciative of life, family and friends. Also, not to waste food, I had never appreciated a packet of noodle or biscuit more in my life, to have tin tuna was a luxury.”

Chute described winning the human rights moot competition organised by the Citizens’ Constitution Forum (CCF) in 2016 as the most memorable experience while studying at the University.

“The unforgettable moment while at FNU was being part of the winning team of the first ever human rights moot competition. I was the second chair of our team and my other two team mates was Viliame Waqalevi (1st Chair) and Jagath Karunaratne (3rd Chair).”

“We took on law students from The University of the South Pacific (USP) and the competition was judged by Justice David Alfred at the Fiji High Court. I was the only female participant and was the second best mooter.”

Chute is looking forward to furthering her legal skills in the area of family law, specializing in child protection and juvenile cases.

“I believe that laws were made to give a people a sense of what is wrong and right and to ensure that the poor, the vulnerable and those less fortunate were not abused or discriminated. But the danger is that the laws were created by man and so it is sometimes abused. Therefore, I pray that when I do become a lawyer, God will be my source of strength and wisdom, because without Jesus I am nothing.”

Trio graduate from same village



(L-R) Uraia Dokana, with graduates Peni Navutovuto Mara, Loraini Lewareguregu, and Vereniki Batikalou and Nawaisomo village elder, Vetaia Koro.

It was history in the making as three students from the same village graduated with Bachelor of Education (Primary) from the Fiji National University's College of Humanities and Education (CHE).

The trio, Loraini Lewareguregu, Peni Navutovuto Mara and Vereniki Batikalou all hail from Nawaisomo village, Nagonenicolo in Naitasiri. Nawaisomo village is almost a three-hour journey by road to Nausori town.

Given the long travel distance, the students and members of the community departed home at 4am to be on time for the graduation ceremony at the FMF Gymnasium in Suva.

Lewareguregu, who currently teaches Years 5 and 6 at Naqara District School in Kadavu said it was a wonderful occasion for them as well as for their village.

She said that never before has anyone from her village graduated as a primary school teacher and it was a truly proud moment for them to stand amongst the 426 graduating students from the CHE.

"It has been a tough journey for us all. There were a lot of expectations from everyone back home in the village and that provided us great motivation to work hard and achieve our goal which was to graduate with our degree," said Lewareguregu.

"We thank all our family members and the villagers for their over-whelming support and believing in us. We hope that we have been able to encourage others back in the village to strive towards achieving their goals."

Mara currently teaches Year 3 and 4 at Veinuqa District School in Namosi while Batikalou

teaches Year 6 at Koroqaqa Primary School in Nausori.

Mara said they found strength in each other to overcome challenges while studying at FNU.

He said they would hold group studies with other students to ensure that no one was lagging behind in their studies.

"Joining a University to study can be a bit intimidating and we were lucky that all of us knew each other, which made things easier for us," said Mara.

"We were able to make new friends and during the course of our study we encouraged each other so that we would be able to attain our goal. It's been an interesting and fulfilling journey as you get to know more about being independent and making the right decisions. I'm glad we stuck together and were able to successfully complete the programme."

Vetaia Koro, a village elder from Nawaisomo said the graduation of the three students was a highlight for his village.

Koro said the trio were now role models for the youths in the village.

"We are very happy to see that our children have achieved this feat. For us in our village this is history. We are extremely proud of their achievements," said Koro.

"We thank all three of them for their perseverance and dedication. I know they will become an inspiration for the rest of the youths in the village and we want to see more students from our village pursue tertiary education and become professionals in different fields of study."

Koro said the community had organised a thank you feast for the graduates to show their appreciation of the trio's achievements.



Satendra follows his passion

Sahil Sajnish Satendra's love for the film industry attracted him to the Fiji National University's College of Humanities and Education to pursue Certificate IV in Film and Television Production.

The 23-year-old said he was always fascinated by movies growing up and decided to follow his passion after successfully completing Bachelor of Environmental Science two years ago.

"I grew up watching lots of movies and became fascinated with movie production. So when I learnt that FNU offered this programme, I immediately jumped at this opportunity and enrolled for it. I don't regret my decision at all as I've always wanted to pursue a career in this field," said Satendra.

On the day of his graduation, Satendra was offered employment by Fiji Television Limited.

This news according to Satendra provided him with further encouragement to follow his career goal.

"It is truly a memorable moment for me. It's like a double celebration for my family and I. Now I feel that all the hard work is now paying off," he said.

An elated Satendra dedicated his achievement to his mother and sister, both of whom he said strongly supported his life-decisions.

"The inspiration and support from my mother and sister has kept me going in life. I chose this career after I got to learn from my friends how fun filled it is but the biggest credit goes to these two women in my life for supporting my decision and allowing me to do things in which my interest lies," Satendra added.

Satendra was one of nine students who graduated from the Certificate IV in Film and Television Production programme.

The tight-knit group were all in a joyous mood after the completion of the graduation. Two best friends Maravu Nainimua Ulualotu Naivalu and Samisoni Robin Drugunalevu Baledrokadroka also danced at the ceremony during the short interval to the sounds of the music band that entertained the crowd at the FMF Gymnasium.

Naivalu is currently attached with the Department of Information while Baledrokadroka works at the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited.

Naivalu said it was both a joyous and emotional moment for the group to graduate. He said everyone in the programme had become like family.

"It's a nostalgic feeling really as we all formed a great team and it's hard to say good bye as we all go our separate ways. It has been a great journey and we truly miss each other," said Naivalu.

Baledrokadroka on the other hand said the lessons acquired during the programme really helped him with his work at FBC. He said it was easy for him to learn quickly on the job.

"I like working at FBC as they have a dynamic team and I'm able to learn a lot of new things as well as contribute a lot to the team," said Baledrokadroka.

He said working with professionals has opened his horizon and he was gaining valuable experience.

"Working in the media industry requires you to be on your toes at all times. You have to work as a team and ensure that you are able to meet strict deadlines. I love my work and I learn new things every day. It's exciting and fun," Baledrokadroka said.



Khan dedicates success to Mum

Twenty-two-year-old Shaheen Nissa Khan who graduated with a Bachelor of Nursing from the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS) credits her mother for her success.

Speaking after her graduation, Khan said it was her mother who instilled in her the values of caring for others.

“I learnt to care for others from my mother. She is a very caring and passionate woman and she taught me that we have to care for each other and this is what inspired me to become a Nurse,” said Khan.

She said despite facing difficulties in life, her mother has been the torch who guided her through the darkness.

Originally from Sigatoka, Khan was born at Colonial War Memorial (CWM) Hospital and attended Rahmatullah Khan Memorial School before joining Nadroga Arya College for her secondary school education.

“I was brought up in a rural settlement and there was no proper transportation to go to school. I come from a poor family background. My father is a sales person at an automotive parts shop in Nadi and my mother is a domestic worker,” said Khan.

Shaheen said the daily challenges made her want to study even harder and she made it her goal to join the Fiji National University (FNU) to pursue her tertiary education.

“Despite financial constraints, my father managed to provide

me with an education by all means possible whether it be taking loans or sometimes selling a few livestock. Also thanks to the Fijian Government I was able to enrol at FNU through the Tertiary Education Loans Scheme,” she said.

Khan’s elder sister, who graduated from FNU as a school teacher provided her with motivation when she faced challenges during her studies.

“My sister always told me that if she could succeed after coming from the same background that I could do it too. It was difficult at times when you have deadlines for assignments and exams but with support from my family and friends at the Nursing school I managed to make it to the finish line,” said Khan.

Her mother, Roseline Salma Bano said she was really proud of her daughter’s achievement.

“We always encouraged her to work hard when she was studying in Suva,” she said.

Bano said she always ensured that her daughters had everything they needed for their education with whatever little money they had.

Khan, while reflecting on her journey said attending University and being away from her family was tough.

“It was a challenge as I hadn’t been away from my family ever and I missed them every day,” she said.

“I was never tested so much in my life. There were times I became emotional as juggling assignments and practical work is

not easy. I have never endured a hardship like I did in Nursing school. But I realise that life is such and all the challenges make us stronger and wiser. You cannot be complacent in life and I can confidently stand here today and say that all those challenges have prepared me to face the world out there,” she said.

Khan said the most enjoyable time during the course of her studies was doing practical at various hospitals and health centres.

As part of her practical training, Khan has worked at Colonial War Memorial Hospital, Samabula Health Centre, Raiwaqa Health Centre, Nuffield Health Centre, Twomey Hospital, Samabula Old Peoples Home, St Giles Hospital, Nausori Health Centre, Suva Health Office and Nausori Maternity Unit.

“I could not wait when it was time for our practical sessions. I had my uniforms and clinical set ready the night before clinical,” said Khan with a smile.

“In my second year of practical, I experienced a lot more things such as administering injections, medicines, delivery, caring of patients on ventilator, working in operation theatre and looking after psychiatric patients. The memories, teachings and experiences will stay with me forever and I will treasure it all my life.”

Khan keenly looks forward to her posting and after gaining a few years of experience she plans to pursue further studies in midwifery through FNU.

Taufa receives special award



Tonga Moala Taufa with her family members at the graduation.

Coming to Fiji from Tonga to study Post Graduate Diploma in Leadership and Management Nursing at the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS) was one of the hardest decisions that Tonga Moala Taufa ever made in her life but it paid-off generously in the end.

It was a double celebration for Taufa as she graduated from her programme and also scooped the Special Award for her excellent performance from the College.

The 31-year-old dedicated her achievements to her family, who she said had been her pillar of strength.

“It has been tough. Especially when it is the first time for my family and I to be studying away from our home,” said Taufa.

“Having two kids also requires me to perform my role as a mother especially assisting them with their homework and also to make time for them. Luckily my husband has been there every step of the way which really helped me by fulfilling my duty as a mother at home while I pursued my studies.”

The soft-spoken Taufa also thanked the lecturers at the Nursing School who assisted in completing her studies.

Taufa said she decided to pursue nursing management after developing an interest in leadership. “When I entered nursing school, I always worked under the direction of senior staff and also our ward managers. Working with the patients, people and my co-workers required effective communication skills and good leadership. From there on I developed an interest in Nursing Leadership to gain more skills and knowledge in the area of nursing management so that our patients receive the best care,” she said.

Taufa who works at the Vaiola Hospital located on the main Island of Tongatapu said it was her father’s asthmatic condition which pushed her to pursue a career in the Nursing field.

“While growing up my father was sickly and he was frequently admitted in hospital. He has been my motivating factor because even though he has been in and out of the hospital due to his health, it did not stop him from pushing my siblings and me to study hard and always aim high,” she said.

“He continued to work hard so that he could support our family and also to make sure to have food on our table and pay our school fees. Seeing my father working so hard despite his health condition really motivated me.”

Taufa said during the times her father received care at the hospital, she admired the work of nurses and how they cared for her father.

“This built my passion in Nursing, since then I have always dreamed of becoming a Nurse to help my father’s health condition and also to help the people,” she said.

As a teenager, Taufa had seen her parents struggle to provide for the family and this further motivated her to study hard and get into Nursing school back home.

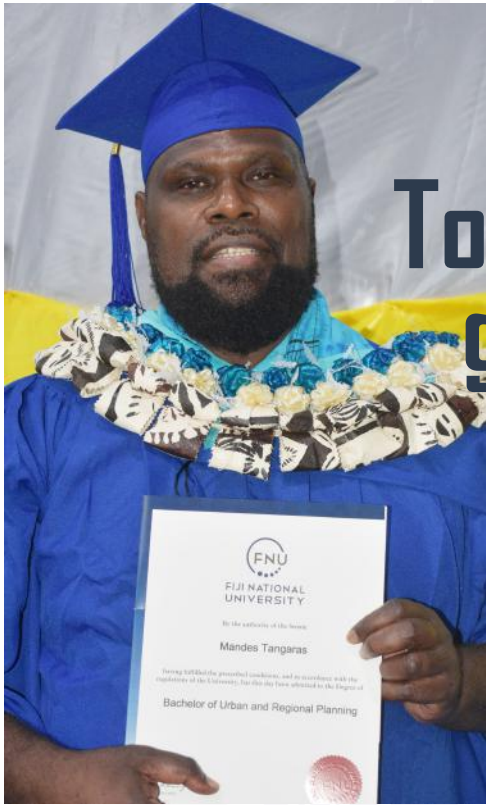
Taufa said she remained positive when faced with challenges to achieve her dream.

“Growing up, I had to be satisfied with what my family could afford especially to be satisfied with whatever my parents could afford for school,” she said.

Taufa said her role model is the Chief Nursing Officer, Dr Amelia Afuhamango Tuipulotu at the Vaiola Hospital in Tonga.

“Dr Vaiola has contributed a lot to the Nursing profession in Tonga. She is my role model because she inspired me to pursue further studies in Nursing and taught me to humble myself before patients and also the co-workers,” Taufa said.

Taufa lists her hobbies as singing, sports, reading and swimming. She is currently pursuing Masters in Health Service Management at Fiji National University’s College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences.



Town Planner graduates

It was after a lapse of twenty-four years that Mandes Tangaras visited a lecture room and thought the idea of going back to school seemed easy, the Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning graduate admitted it was challenging at times.

But despite the hurdles the Ni-Vanuatu's desire to attain a qualification in the field of his interest was his biggest motivation so he enrolled at Fiji National University's College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST).

Tangaras, who holds the position of Manager of Town Planning and Infrastructure Development at Port Villa Municipal Council, said his experience in this field played a significant role in assisting with his studies at FNU.

"I had initially enrolled in the Civil Engineering programme and did that for one year although I had always wanted to be a planner. As I got to know more about the programmes offered at CEST, I stumbled upon the Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning and immediately I made arrangements to switch. It was truly a blessing for me," said Tangaras.

The 47-year-old said adjusting to University life after a long break took a while but it was all worth it in the end.

"Once you start working you get into that routine and it becomes easier to cope in that environment. But it becomes a little difficult to adjust when that routine changes to something completely different," Tangaras said.

"For me, it meant going to a new country and then adjusting myself in the life of a student. It's a big change especially when you have family. It certainly was challenging but interesting too at the same time especially when you have students in class who are younger than you. I did learn a lot and it's been an enjoyable journey."

Tangaras said support from his wife and daughter was crucial in successfully completing his studies.

With his dream qualification now finally secured, Tangaras said it felt that his student life at FNU came to an end in just a blink of an eye.

Tangaras said he would leave Fiji with lots of fond memories.

He said the topics covered in the Urban and Regional Planning programme makes it interesting and challenges students to think 'outside the box.' Tangaras said there was a huge demand for planners in the world today due to infrastructure development and economic growth.

"It helps students to identify the challenges in communities and at national level. We need more specialist planners to ensure that our municipalities are developed in a structured manner and whatever infrastructure that is implemented is done correctly by taking into account long term development. Proper planning is vital as opposed to building structures anywhere and anyhow we like."

Tangaras said proper planning will lead to economic growth and sustainable development in all countries.

He aims to pursue a Masters qualification in Urban and Regional Planning soon but for now, Tangaras is excited to resume his duties back home.

Sukaciba defies odds to graduate



Ilikini Sukaciba with his family members after the graduation ceremony.

Inspiration is when you see 25 year-old Ilikini Sukaciba, who suffers from **Muscular Dystrophy** (a group of muscle diseases that results in increasing weakening and breakdown of skeletal muscles over time) wear the biggest grin as he slowly walked to the podium to receive his Diploma in Information Technology in Networking from Chief Guest David Kolitagane, the Permanent Secretary for Agriculture.

For the Kadavu lad it's been an emotional journey living with the physical disability of **Muscular Dystrophy** that started at a young age.

Kini as he is affectionately called by his family was over-whelmed to graduate in front of his friends and family.

"I'm really happy that I've managed to complete my studies. It took a lot of hard work and dedication but it feels good to be finally here," said Ilikini.

"I thank all my family and friends for their support. Unfortunately my mum could not be here today as she's still at her village in Vanua Levu but I know her well-wishes are always with me.

"I was in class three when my mum noticed I had a problem with my feet and knee. Walking around became a tiresome task as I had to move very slowly. Climbing steps was out of the question. I can't catch the bus because of the high steps as my knees would have severe pain. If I have to travel then I have to use a taxi."

The ginger-haired lad became emotional as he shared about his journey from Vanua Levu to Suva to pursue his studies at the Fiji Vocational Technical Training Centre. The Centre located at Brown Street specially caters for persons living with disabilities.

Sukaciba enrolled into the Carpentry and Joinery programme but he soon realised that due to his physical disability he could not perform up to expectation. He had difficulty in handling equipment and performing other tasks.

So he switched and enrolled in the Diploma in IT Networking which was offered under the National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC).

"It was a good programme. I was inspired to try it out because it was something I saw myself doing. There were other students from the Fiji Vocational Technical Training Centre but five of us graduated," said Sukaciba.

"The trainers were well-equipped to take on the challenges and simplified the modules for students to understand. It was interesting for many of us living with disabilities to be able to go through this programme. We are truly grateful to NTPC for facilitating us and I hope they will continue to provide training to more students with such challenges."

Sukaciba is currently doing his attachment with Fiji Revenue & Customs Service.

Late grandma inspires Vunibaka

Young Saiasi Navatu Vunibaka became teary as he walked up the podium to collect his Trade Diploma in Agriculture during the College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF) graduation ceremony.

The 22-year-old who was born Nausori but grew up in Lautoka under the guidance of his maternal grandmother, late Unaisi Tinaitaqiri Vunibaka, had flash backs of his childhood memories as he clasped the Fiji National University (FNU) folder which contained his certificate.

From his young primary school years through to secondary school at Tilak High School, Vunibaka assisted his late granny with household chores and earning cash from selling vegetables by the roadside.

"I wish my grandmother was present here today to see me at my graduation. She was my inspiration and guided me to where I am today. This certificate is for her. She unfortunately passed away last year," said Vunibaka.

"Growing up, I would help my grandmother to put food on our table through our 'teitei' (backyard garden). We faced a lot of financial difficulties but my grandma would always tell me to remain patient, be strong and believe in prayers.

"Some days were a real struggle as I went to school on foot without any food. I also struggled with proper uniform and other accessories but I learnt to humble myself and use what was available to me and make the best of it."

Vunibaka acquired his love for agriculture while he worked in his backyard garden. His interest peaked when he took up Agriculture Science in secondary school.

"I love the outdoors and I took up Agriculture Science when I went to secondary school. I also read the newspapers and knew that there was a lot of potential in Agriculture sector in Fiji so I decided to enroll at CAFF to further my studies in this field."

Vunibaka hails from Qalikarua, Matuku with maternal links to Keteira, Moala both

in the Province of Lau and is the eldest of six siblings.

"Throughout my time at the University time management was one of the challenges I faced as I had to learn to balance education, sports, home chores, family time at home and religion. I'm thankful to my uncle Lisala Dyer who provided me sound advice and encouragement at times when I would have lost focus for a little bit," Vunibaka added.

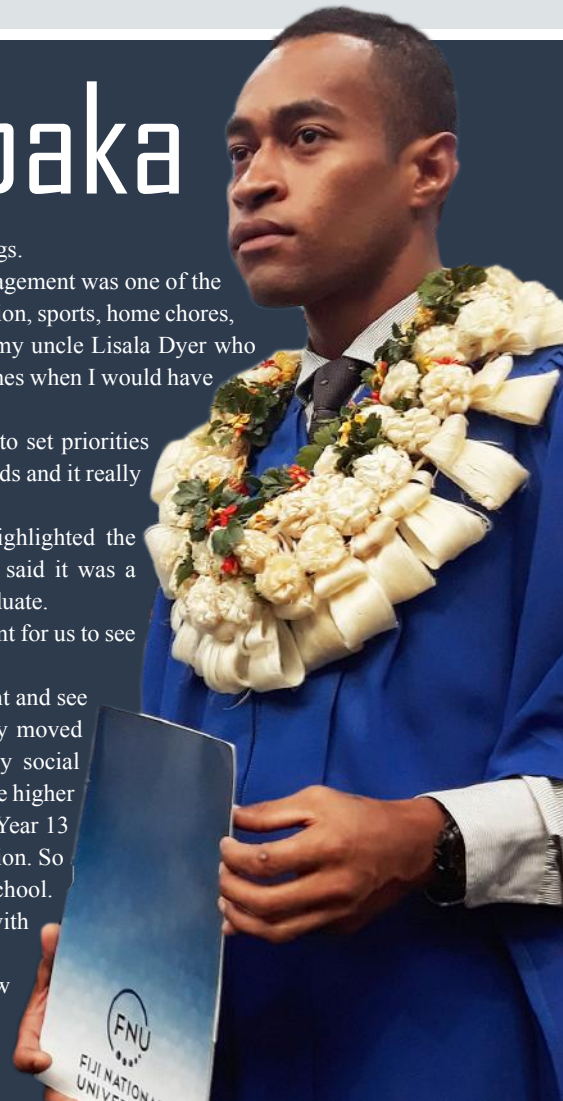
"My first year was fairly challenging, but I had to set priorities and manage my time right. I sacrificed most weekends and it really has paid-off today.

In sharing he's nephew's achievement, Dyer highlighted the struggles his aunt went through since 2006. Dyer said it was a proud moment for their family to see Vunibaka graduate.

"It's truly an emotional and wonderful achievement for us to see that our nephew is graduating today," said Dyer.

"I would always visit him (Vunibaka) and my aunt and see the struggles they were going through. I was really moved by their struggles and made a commitment as my social contribution that I would assist my nephew to receive higher education. I told my aunty that whoever completes Year 13 will move to Suva with me to pursue tertiary education. So Saiasi and his brother Joni joined me after high school. Joni is currently pursuing Civil Engineering with FNU," said Dyer.

Vunibaka hopes to return to FNU in the next few years to pursue his Degree.



Engineering, Science and Technology is transforming the world – Prof Healey



Students at the 2018 Engineering, Science and Technology Exhibition.

Fiji National University (FNU) Vice Chancellor Professor Nigel Healey says the world continues to advance rapidly and in almost every sphere of the human life, scientific and technological advances will transform the way people live and work.

Professor Healey said the digitally-connected 24/7 world we are living in is unrecognisable from that of several decades ago and it will change in the future even faster, in ways that cannot be currently predicted.

“From gamification and virtual reality to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Robotics, the way we live, work and play is changing at lightning speed. Once in the realms of science fiction, autonomous vehicles, 3D printing and the Internet of Things are now everyday terms,” said Professor Healey.

Professor Healey cited some of the examples of how the technological revolution was taking over the world:

- Gamification and virtual reality will reshape not only the way we play, but the increasingly the way we learn and communicate in the future. In the years ahead, computers and smartphones may seem strange and old-fashioned as we interact with each other in virtual reality. Already, executives in one major I-T company have their meetings virtually, communicating with each other from around the world through their avatars.

- Our global connectivity means that we can already connect with, and work on a range of challenges, with people from around the world. The human genome, for example, was sequenced by interconnected research teams in twenty universities and research centres in the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, France, Germany, Canada, and China.

- Robotics will continue to replace humans, but in increasingly sophisticated tasks. Robots took over assembly lines in the 1980s and already we have pilotless drone aircraft and driverless taxis. Robotics and artificial intelligence will change the way we use human labour in the years ahead.

- Biotechnology is allowing us to reshape nature, to eliminate plant disease and increase productivity. Coupled with nanotechnology, which allows us to design molecules, we can cure cancer, eliminate Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease. With stem cells, we can restore sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf.

- Advances in electricity generation, for example through the low-energy splitting of water molecules to create hydrogen gas and the 3D

printing of tiny silicone batteries, will transform the way we produce and consume energy.

Professor Healey said events such as the Engineering, Science and Technology Exhibition provide students and parents an excellent opportunity to learn about advancements being made in these important fields of study and how it contributes to the economic development and prosperity of nations around the world.

“At the College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST) we offer a diverse range of programmes from certificates to PhD level and such Exhibitions provide students an opportunity to see the career options available in the market. The students learn what the right subject combinations are for the careers they intend to pursue so they go back set their goals early in life. It helps to plan your career better,” said Professor Healey.

“To succeed in this world of ever-more rapid change, you will need to build upon the qualifications you have earned at university and continue to learn and reskill throughout your lives to adapt to the changes that have yet to come. Learning is certainly a continuous process and I hope that everyone that participated in our Exhibitions received valuable information that will help guide them to a successful career path.”

The theme for the Exhibition “Engineering Innovation for a Sustainable Future” reinforces the need for engineers, scientists, technicians and leaders across all industries to perform their duties in a transparent and responsible manner to ensure a sustainable future for all.

Acting Dean CEST, Mr. Salabogi Mavoia said the exhibition provided an opportunity for University students to display their projects and interact with prospective students, parents and industry representatives.

“The Exhibition enabled us the opportunity to showcase to prospective students and the public our training facilities, lecturers and projects being undertaken by our students as part of their studies,” said Mavoia.

“It also provided students insight to the different fields of study in engineering, science and technology and various career paths available. Whether it is a career in Engineering, (Civil, Electrical, Electronics or Mechanical) or Science or Technology – their visit to the exhibition assisted them to select a career and begin working towards it,” Mavoia said.

The Engineering, Science and Technology Exhibition was held at Derrick Campus in Samabula, Suva and Ba Campus.

MY SAY

Rizwan Asgar
Derrick Students Association - President



As the President of the Derrick Students Association, it was indeed a proud and humbling opportunity for all my members to be part of the organising committee for the 2018 Engineering, Science and Technology Exhibition. I would like to extend my thanks to the Fiji National University Students’ Association (FNUSA) and Dean’s office for guiding us to work with them on this project.

Our members assisted with ushering of school students, manning display booths, coordinating with departments and providing entertainment. All the members thoroughly enjoyed themselves of being part of the event. It was a great learning experience for all of us and we believe that the students who visited Derrick Campus over the two days indeed had a wonderful time during the tour.

We were well-placed at the frontline during the event, as being recent graduates of secondary schools, we were able to easily interact with our visitors and provide them with important information regarding the programmes that are offered at the College of Engineering Science and Technology (CEST).

Most of the enquiries received from students were mainly to do with the minimum entry requirements into particular programmes, while others were interested to know about career paths and if it was fun doing the programme that they had showed interest in. A lot of the students were also interested to know more about University life – what are the lecturers like, how can you cope with studies, assignments and the general facilities that are available at the Fiji National University.

Having such events is important as it provides students, teachers and parents a better opportunity to understand about all the study opportunities at FNU and how students can map their future. We were really glad to see that many female students were interested in programmes that are usually dominated by male students. This is a very good sign and we would like to encourage more women to take up trade qualifications as it really is enjoyable, interesting and it pays well.

We were glad to note that there was a good turn-out of students at Derrick and Ba Campuses. Adi Cakobau School (ACS) had one of the largest contingents with 280 students plus teachers.

The overall response from students was positive and we look forward to working with the organising committee again next year to make it bigger and better.

Student Views

Eparama Wakaniyaro
Vunimono High School

It was a wonderful experience visiting the College of Engineering, Science and Technology. I've learnt so much today, especially after looking at the displays I now understand how broad Science is and how creative Science students can be. I am really looking forward to joining this College next year as I plan to further my studies in Geology.



Kavita Deo
DAV College, Nabua

I think this is a very creative way to inform the students about the different career opportunities available in the field of Science. I really enjoyed the day with my friends visiting the booths and I must say the displays are very creative, interesting and informative.



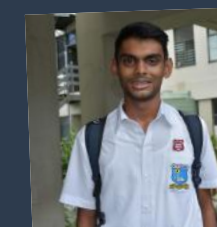
Meli Nauku
Queen Victoria School

It has been a very fruitful day for me. After looking at the environment here, I can say this is a very good campus to study Engineering because after interacting with students I have realized that the FNU students undergo a lot practical which I believe is a plus point for any student looking at studying Engineering.



Naysheel Madhwan
Jai Narayan College

This exhibition is informative and interactive. The students conducting the demonstrations are knowledgeable and took time to explain to us all the displays. I would like to thank FNU for providing a platform to showcase Science capabilities. I have learnt some new things which would greatly help me in exploring my future career.



Innovative Automotive projects excite students



Rizwan Mohammed interacts with students during the two-day Exhibition at Derrick Campus, Samabula.

Good turn-out at Ba Campus



Students at the Engineering, Science and Technology Exhibition at Ba Campus.

More than 1,000 students from 14 secondary schools in the western division attended the one-day Engineering, Science and Technology Exhibition organised at Ba Campus.

Chief Guest, Senior Education Officer (SEO) Ba, Atendra Kumar acknowledged Fiji National University's contribution towards meeting the employment demand of the nation. Kumar informed visiting students of the great demand for graduates with trade qualifications in the country and encouraged them to enroll at FNU.

"Engineers – through local, national and global communities act as critical agents of change. Fiji needs great thinkers, problem solvers, creative and innovative engineers in all sectors to boost the national economy for a sustainable future," said SEO Kumar.

"What is clear, however, is that we will not achieve engineering innovation for a sustainable future through existing paradigms of carbon-intensive growth and strategies of 'pollute now and clean up later.' This is especially evident in meeting the pressing challenges of urbanization."

Over 90 projects and models were showcased during the Exhibition.

"Engineers have a critical role to play, as creators of ideas and facilitators of change, which foster collaboration and inspire the change in thinking and action that is needed to build 'The Future We Want.' Sustainable and resilient initiatives need to be made more prominent part of public participation and debate," said Kumar.

"The Government of the day through the Ministry Of Education is providing toppers scholarship and the TELS program to motivate the students in pursuing their dreams in Engineering. Seize this opportunity and assist us in building a more sustainable and resilient future for our beloved nation."

Loud music, fancy lights, modifications of small automotive engines and revving of engines greeted hundreds of students at the Automotive Engineering booth during the two-day Exhibition at Derrick Campus, Samabula.

The secondary school students beaming with smiles crowded around the projects created by the Automotive Engineering students who also were at hand to explain to the visitors more about their displays.

Fiji National University student Rizwan Mohammed enthusiastically explained to students about his group's project which was the assembly of a golf cart with complete wiring and sound system.

Mohammed, who is studying Advanced Diploma in Automotive Engineering, explained to students how they had assembled a battery-operated cart and colour-coded the different components to make it easier to understand how the machine operated.

"If it is a normal cart, you won't be able to know how the cart operates because you will not be exposed to the interior where all the automotive works are done. So we stripped a normal golf cart and colour-coded it – like the brakes, speed wiring; all have different colour-coding so that it is easier for the students to make out how the golf cart operates," said Mohammed.

The cart was boosted with surround sound system which made the display more 'funky' and secondary school students lined up in numbers and patiently waited for their turns to hitch a ride in the cool refurbished cart.

While the students enjoyed the ride, Mohammed and his team explained to them the broad area of study covered under the Automotive Engineering programme.

"This programme is very interesting because it has various other components embedded in it apart from just automotive studies. This field covers from small brush cutter engines to large excavators, forklifts and so forth," he said.

"It is exciting to learn about the new technologies that keep evolving time and again in this industry, particularly the calculations needed to ascertain the way certain machines operate. One example is the Hybrid cars – it is new in the market and people need to be trained on how to service this types of vehicles. So you get to learn about new machines in the market all the time which keeps careers in this field interesting," he added.

The 26-year-old from Vatusui, Ba said advancement in technology was one of the key drivers of a country's economic growth.

"We all use technology daily and likewise we heavily rely on the transport system to get from point A to B. In the olden days travelling would be very difficult and many would use horses to transport passengers or goods to the market. And that used to take a lot of time but now everything is advanced and it will become further advanced with driverless cars and trains," Mohammed said.

Being in the engineering industry for five years as the heavy mobile plant mechanic at Fiji Sugar Corporation in Rarawai, Ba, Mohammed said it was encouraging to see many female students enquiring about the career choices in this male-dominated field.

"During the Exhibition we have had many females showing interest in the displays we had and asked us about the entry requirements for these programmes. This is a very good sign and we would like to encourage more females to take up courses in engineering."

"We have had females successfully graduating from this College and even some of them as lecturers here which is a very proud thing for me personally," he added.

Mohammed scooped the Best Apprentice award from FNU's National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) in 2016 after which he was awarded the AusAid scholarship to further his studies at the College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST).

The Fiji National University's Nikua is a monthly newsletter which aims to promote the University's activities to the wider community.

This newsletter is designed by the University Marketing and Communications team.

For views or comments please email mprc@fnu.ac.fj or contact 3394000.

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FNU NIKUA wants to hear from you

FNU NIKUA welcomes submissions by staff and students for publication in the newsletter. Please send your suggestions, comments or articles for consideration to mprc@fnu.ac.fj



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