

FNU **NIKUA**

ONE DESTINATION, MANY PATHS



**FIJI NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY**

ISSUE NO. 01

JANUARY 2021

STUDENTS CELEBRATE
SUCCESS

BATAI FAMILY RECEIVES A
POSTHUMOUS CERTIFICATE

Study with us



Greetings from the Fiji National University.

Choosing the right university is one of the most important decisions of your life, and it can feel overwhelming if you do not know where to start. So, if you are currently in this phase and struggling to make that

crucial decision, do not worry. At the Fiji National University (FNU), we are here to assist you in your transition to make the process less daunting, as you embark on this new journey.

Whether you have already received your offer of a place at FNU or are still awaiting your confirmation letter, we are delighted that you have accepted us as your education provider.

I can assure you that at FNU, you will discover countless opportunities to explore your passions, develop new interests, make new friends, and fulfil your potential.

If you are yet to choose your university, here are some highlights about why FNU could be for you:

Distance and Location

If you don't fancy heading too far away from your home for further studies, why not explore our Campuses near your place. FNU has Campuses and Centres at 33 locations throughout the country. As a new and dynamic institution, yet one with an illustrious history within its component Colleges, FNU is developing, innovating and expanding daily to provide Fiji and the region with the education and training students need and deserve.

Programmes

The next big thing is deciding on the programme you want to study and the specific areas you want to focus on. As the only dual-sector university in Fiji, FNU offers approximately 400 different courses. We tailor-make the training course to suit industry needs. Our programmes are offered in both face-to-face and blended modes, and we offer an excellent blend of theoretical learning and practical experiences.

Low-cost tuition fees

Another vital thing you should look at when selecting a university is how much it will cost you. FNU offers low-cost and affordable tuition fee compared to other universities. Prospective FNU students have one less thing to worry about this year as the university offers flexible fee payment options for the duration of their study. Students can enrol at FNU in their programme of choice and enter into a payment plan of agreed instalments with the University's Division of Finance. The payment plan will allow our students to pursue their academic aspirations without the financial burden of paying the full amount upfront.

Teaching and Learning Excellence

Skilled and motivated teachers are integral to providing positive teaching and learning outcomes for students. Fiji National University has a strong focus on teaching excellence. You will learn from academics who are passionate about what they do, are actively engaged in their industry and enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge and expertise.

Student Support

Whether you end up needing it or not, it is always important to be aware of the support that is available to you as a student. Student support services are provided through the FNU's Office of the Registrar, who understand the importance of having fun-filled and student-driven campus life activities. With this in mind, FNU provides exciting residential life, student health and wellness, career services, campus life, disability services and sports.

Student Association

When you join FNU, you join the vast student body made up of the local, regional and international students who are part of a continuously growing and developing institution that has grown from strength to strength owing to the past and current student leaders and their input along with the university staff.

The core objective of FNUSA is to be an organisation for the student and by the student. The association is mandated to voice student opinions and welfare issues with relevant stakeholders.

HOW TO APPLY AT FNU

1. ENQUIRE

Please log onto www.fnu.ac.fj and browse through the list of programmes.

2. APPLY

Applicants can:

- Apply online via email: admissions@fnu.ac.fj
- Visit the academic office at the nearest FNU Campus
- Visit the FNU team at the FNU enrolment booth at the MHCC Complex in Suva until 5th March.
- Applicants may also post their complete applications to: Student Academic Services, P. O. Box 7222, Nasinu.

3. SUBMISSION

Submit the Application after reviewing the Student declaration.

4. OFFER LETTER

If the Minimum Entry Requirement (MER) is met, then you will be provided with the Offer Letter. Read the Offer Letter for important information regarding your offer and acceptance.

5. CONFIRMATION

- To become a student, you need to accept the offer.
- Register for courses according to programme structure.
- Get an invoice from Finance Office
- Pay the enrolment fees according to details in the invoice.
- Get a validated ID card from Student Academic Services Office at a Local Campus.

To help ease your transition into the university, we have equipped you with a wide range of information on registering with us and what our different services can offer you this year.

As you navigate through the FNU website on www.fnu.ac.fj to find out more about us, we wish you the best of luck in finding your calling and we are excited to have you join us.

FNU looks forward to meeting and welcoming you soon.

Best Wishes,
Professor Toby Wilkinson,
 Vice-Chancellor



Students Celebrate Success

Having completed their last year of tertiary studies defined by a pandemic, social distancing, virtual classes and studying from home, Fiji National University's (FNU), School of Dentistry and Oral Health students ensured their graduation was a day of celebration.

Based under the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS), the School held its graduation ceremony at the Suva Civic Centre earlier this month, whereby four students obtained a Diploma in Dental Technology, ten students graduated with a Bachelor of Oral Health and 11 Bachelor of Dental Surgery recipients.

Chief Guest, Colgate Palmolive Marketing Manager, Ms Jyotika Devi, congratulated the graduates and said she could feel the pride and joy of their parents, family, friends and loved ones fill the auditorium.

"Never forget who you are and the people who have supported and stood by you since day one. It is through their sacrifice and love that you have managed to complete your study journey successfully," Devi said.

"Sometimes, when we move on in our careers, we get so overwhelmed and busy that we cannot take time out for the very people who are sitting with us in this auditorium today who have sacrificed so much for us."

"I know the pride they have for you. I hope you never forget that and never forget who you are."

Devi reminded the graduates to enter the workforce with professionalism, humbleness, patience and the determination always to serve their communities diligently.

"In university, all we want to do is graduate and start building our careers, and we think it will be easy, but reality starts now," she shared.

"You will be faced with many dilemmas in life. You will come across many people that may put you in a compromising position or test your loyalty but don't forget who you are. Be true to your passion and career.

"It's all about serving the communities."

Head of School, Dr Osea Gavidi Dukuno, said he was pleased to see the students have a somewhat traditional ceremony in the presence of their family and friends.

"I am honoured to be here and was pleased we were able to hold this occasion this year after a challenging and memorable 2020," Dr Dukuno said.

"Today you have proved to us that you are capable of organising such an event and I am very proud of you all. It is a time of celebration and new beginnings for you."

"Today is also a day of thanksgiving. A day to thank God and the people who

supported and stood by you during your years of study at the Fiji National University."

Dr Dukuno commended the students for adapting to the new methods of learning and teaching and overcome obstacles they may have faced, such as the lack of proper learning devices and internet connectivity issues.

"I salute you all for your determination and courage to pursue and carry on with your studies online. Being clinically competent was an important aspect of your studies, and this was successfully achieved through the extended clinical sessions held at the end of last year," he said.

"In addition to this, we cannot ignore or disregard aspects of your learning that has developed your soft skills, attitude and personality."

"These skills form the attributes you need to navigate the new environment you will embark on."

Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) graduate Zaria Zaheen Begum delivered the valedictorian speech and brought the audience to tears and laughter as she reminisced on their five-year study journey.

"We started our journey in 2016 fresh out of high school and racing to make a place in this world. All fired up and ready to go," she said proudly.

"When you're 18 years old and fresh out of school into College, you have a million hopes and dreams bottled in these students."

"Simply put, most of us were shielded from the hardships of life by our parents until now. In dental school, we are exposed to many aspects of life that have shaped us emotionally," she reflected.

"BDS was a roller coaster ride that started out slowly but kept going faster. Every graduate here deserves great recognition and praise for the work they have done."

Begum received applause of agreement from fellow graduates after stating that they were proud to finally complete a chapter in their lives that they started as teenagers.

"Today we are in a situation of a paradigm shift, as we are torn between the excitement of our future and the joy of our memories," she said.

"Should we stop and look back on some of the best years of our lives, or do we focus on the next chapter?"

"For now, let's just do what Mother Theresa said. Be happy in the moment, that's enough."

The students also held a minute of silence in remembrance of the late academic, Dr Ovinia Masi, and his work and impact in the Dental and teaching profession.

Kumar attains Commerce degree

Sheral Sushmita Kumar excitedly made the trip down to Suva from the West with her family to receive her graduation certificate and celebrate with her loved ones. After more than three years of studying at the Fiji National University (FNU), while working, Kumar said she was glad to have persevered and completed her undergraduate programme.

Kumar was one of the proud Bachelor of Commerce (Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management and Management) graduates who collected their certificates from FNU's Tamavua Campus this month as COVID-19 restrictions halted traditional graduation ceremonies last year.

Originally from Ba, the 23-year-old said she had to master the art of time management when she enrolled in the course at Namaka Campus in 2016.

"It is definitely not a walk in the park when you're studying and working at the same time," she said.

"But your determination to succeed should outweigh the challenges, and sometimes even the temptations, that you will encounter along the way. I was so excited when I did my final unit last year because even though it was a struggle, I was nearing my



academic goal of having this tertiary qualification to my name."

"I continuously tell myself that I can't stop working hard because that's the only key to success."

Kumar, the middle child of three siblings, said a talk with an aunt of hers after completing high school led her into the field of human resources.

"I enjoyed my studies, and I know the importance of HR in any organisation as you need to take care of the welfare and needs of your workers to ensure productivity," she said.

"I chose this study programme so that I could have diverse knowledge in the industry. In the next five to 10 years, I aim to be working at a reputable organisation, offering my skills and services to the company and its workers."

The new graduate, without hesitation, offered advice to students completing high school.

"Always think carefully about your future and career aspirations before making decisions that will affect this. It is sometimes common for some to be pressured by their families to study in a certain field but be confident to stand up for your dreams and show people you have the determination to achieve it."

‘Value time and success will follow’, Stanley’s mantra to his successful journey

It took hard work and perseverance, but it has all been worth it for Jean Jacques Stanley, who recently graduated with a Bachelor of Public Health from the Fiji National University (FNU). Stanley (*Pictured*) is proud to become the first in his family to attain a tertiary qualification.

The 26-year-old was born in Malekula, an island in the Malampa province in Vanuatu. He attended Caroline-Bay Primary School and later moved to College de Luganville before coming to Fiji under the Vanuatu government scholarship in 2017.

While his interest in public health initially began in high school, Stanley did not consider it a career until he met a FNU staff who had gone to Vanuatu as part of the University’s enrolment drive campaign, a few years back.

“The staff mentioned that the Bachelor of Public Health is suitable for individuals who are dedicated to improving health outcomes and gave an insight of the programme that developed my interest in this area of study,” mentioned Stanley.

The recent graduate further stated that he was always in awe of students in his country who secured overseas scholarships to pursue their dreams.

“I always wanted to be one of them, and I am proud and fortunate to have been given this opportunity,” he said.

“I chose to study in Fiji, particularly FNU’s College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

(CMNHS) since most staff from the Ministry of Health Vanuatu have graduated from FNU. So that encouraged me to undertake my studies at one of the reputable educational institution in the Pacific, which produces expertise in various field of studies.”

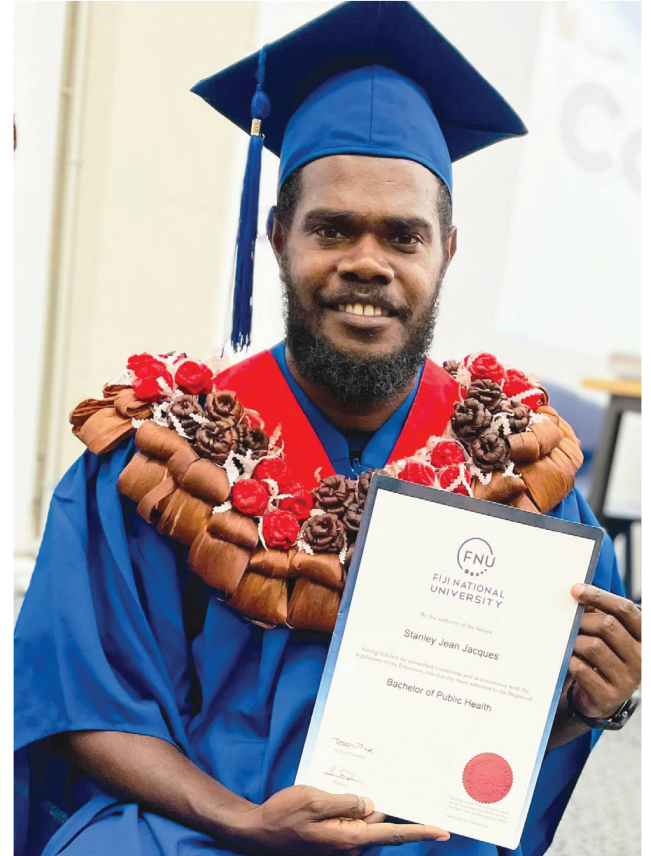
Equipped with the perfect balance of knowledge and skills, Stanley credits his success to his time at FNU.

“My degree helped me to gain a lot of experience in the public health field. The project work component enabled me to explain how I can apply what I learnt in class. One of the most wonderful experience was developing and implementing a rubbish disposable site for a community project in Wailea settlement in Vatuwaqa, Suva. This assisted the community in properly managing their waste to prevent the transmission of diseases,” he added.

With a keen eye to explore and further learn the many aspects of the public health field, Stanley has enrolled in the Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health programme.

“I look forward to the next phase of my studies, and I am excited about it. I want to thank my parents and siblings back at home who have kept me in their prayers and they keep motivating me to accomplish all my goals,” he stated.

Stanley’s advice to the younger generation is ‘Put God first and do not procrastinate’.



Mudunavosa graduates with ageing and community support care qualification



Seini Salavuci Mudunavosa poses for a picture with her husband and kids after receiving her certificate.

Being away from the classroom after a lapse of 12 years did not deter Seini Salavuci Mudunavosa from graduating with a Certificate IV in Ageing and Community Support Care from Fiji National University’s (FNU), College of Humanities and Education (CHE).

After completing high school, Mudunavosa enrolled for a Bachelors in Economics and Management; however, she was forced to cease her studies due to personal reasons. But the desire to pursue tertiary studies remained strong in her mind, which led the 37-year to leave her comfort zone and join FNU.

“After dropping out of my previous programme, I got married and lived as a housewife all these years. My cousin later introduced me to the Ageing and Community Support Care programme at FNU,” said Mudunavosa.

The Certificate IV in Ageing and Community Support Care programme provides graduates with skills to complete specialised tasks and functions in aged services;

either in residential, home or community-based environments.

The qualification enables graduates to work in residential facilities and carry out activities to maintain personal care for people in an aged care setting.

“I was aware of the challenges I will have to go through daily in this choice of profession, but somehow I felt content while enrolling in the programme. It felt like my calling – the thought of being able to help the elderly boosted my interest and confidence in completing the programme.”

“Most people do not want to have a career in this profession because of the nature of the job. For instance, changing diapers – I have done this for my kids, but it is a different task altogether when changing adult diapers. Nonetheless, I took on the challenge of becoming a caregiver because it is a caring job, which allows me to carry out work that has the potential to make a difference in someone’s life.”

As a compulsory component of the programme, Mudunavosa had to undergo five weeks of attachment, which she completed at Tamavua Rehabilitation Centre, St. Giles Psychiatric Hospital, Colonial War Memorial Hospital and the Golden Age Home.

Soft-spoken Mudunavosa described the internship opportunities as surreal.

“At times, it all seemed like a dream because I was so close to attaining my first qualification, and at the same time, it felt like a blessing interacting with the elderly.

I felt satisfied whenever I made someone smile by doing little things that made their day better,” she mentioned.

The mother of four explained that her one-year of studies was not easy as she had to keep a balance between schoolwork, family and internships.

She said apart from graduating with the necessary skills and knowledge needed to be a successful and compassionate caregiver, the student-life also taught her the importance of time management.

“Keeping track of my studies while ensuring there are minimal disruptions to my family time has prepared me well for the future. It wasn’t easy having to make sure that my children are not deprived of any motherly responsibilities from my end because of my schoolwork, and I’m glad to have been able to keep a balance between the two.”

Mudunavosa acknowledged God and her family for being the pillar of strength in her education journey.

“I thank God for this achievement because without his supreme power, I wouldn’t have been able to complete this course. My cousin also deserves the recognition and appreciation for my success as I wouldn’t have known about this programme if it wasn’t for her and not forgetting my husband, for motivating me to resume my studies,” Mudunavosa added.

Vosaicake dedicates success to late father

It was an emotional moment for Meresiana Nasi Liwalala Vosaicake, (Pictured) who received her Bachelor of Science in Agriculture degree from the Fiji National University (FNU). She dearly missed her late father Tomasi Vosaicake during the special occasion.

The 24-year-old recalled that her late father's teachings and love for agriculture boosted her interest and made her enrol in the programme.

"After attending Navuso Agricultural School, my father always worked on our farm with so much passion and dedication. This motivated me to assist him and learn about the modern ways of farming," said Vosaicake.

Unfortunately, her father passed away in 2018, which had a significant impact on her mental health and studies.

"I felt lost in life and didn't know how to overcome this sorrow. At one moment, I even thought to cease my studies and go back to Taveuni and look after my mum because I'm the only child in the family."

"However, after some time I thought about things again with a calm mind and realised that my father would have wanted me to face every obstacle and celebrate the successes bravely," said an emotional Vosaicake.

She then resumed her studies and worked even

harder to finish the programme.

"Since I am his only daughter, he was supposed to be here to see me receive my certificate, but unfortunately he is not. I dedicate this jubilant moment to him, and I feel that he must be proud of me graduating."

Vosaicake also acknowledged the support and guidance of her mother.

"My mother runs a small shop in Taveuni, and I cannot thank her enough for being the shining star in the dark days of my life. I'm planning to go back home soon and have a small party with family and friends to celebrate this achievement."

Reminiscing on her university days, Vosaicake mentioned that the practical field sessions were the most awaited component of their course.

"We students used to have a plot each back at the College farm, which was assessed by our lecturers. One day we went to the farm for our practical class, and it started raining, so we took shelter. After a while, our lecturer came, and he asked us what we were doing. He said to us if you have signed up for the agriculture course then you should be out in the field no matter what the weather condition is."

"And then there we were having rain bath in the field but positively taking this – it was fun and motivating for us as it also taught us the true passion for the profession," Vosaicake said smilingly.



She explained that the situation also taught her that whatever circumstances we go through in life, we must learn from it and keep moving forward in life.

Vosaicake specialised in genetics and completed her internship at Koronivia Research Station's tissue culture lab.

"Our work included crossbreeding between root crops like dalo, different species of taro and cassava – basically all types of root crops. We also conducted analysis and trials of the crossbreeding."

Vosaicake is now looking forward to working and experiencing what the industry has to offer.

Narayan's journey to success



Bishal Narayan and Shereta Kumar graduated with a Postgraduate Diploma in Education

Hard work and dedication has resulted in career progression for Industrial Arts teacher Bishal Narayan. His journey began as an Industrial Arts teacher at the Gospel High School in Suva, and within five years he has become the Head of Department.

Narayan's academic achievements are as impressive as his professional accomplishments. He graduated with a Postgraduate Diploma in Education from the Fiji National University's (FNU), College of Humanities and Education (CHE) this month.

The high-school teacher also holds a Bachelor of Education (Secondary), Higher Education

Diploma in Secondary Education and a Diploma in Building from FNU.

Reflecting on his success, Narayan acknowledged FNU as having a huge impact in shaping him for the future, both personally and professionally.

"I have studied under FNU's two Colleges, the College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST) and the College of Humanities and Education (CHE) and I must say, both Colleges have equipped me with the right knowledge and skills," said Narayan.

Narayan's wife Shereta Kumar, a teacher at Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna Memorial School, simultaneously graduated with a Postgraduate Diploma in Education programme.

For the humble-natured young couple, the sky is the limit. It is the mindset they both had for years which, according to Kumar, led them to an accomplished career.

"We have learnt and experienced a lot in the past few years at FNU. Overall, it was a pleasant journey except for the fact that my husband had to struggle to adjust to the city environment during his initial days as he spent at least six years away from his family, to work hard towards achieving his goals,"

highlighted Kumar.

The couple described their experience of studying together in the same lecture room as "insightful, challenging and rewarding."

"Studying together allowed us to encourage each other and we knew very well that we both have each other's back," said Kumar.

"The Postgraduate Diploma in Education programme enabled us to gain advance knowledge, experience and skills for further education and professional work in education."

"Going through the same programme was ideal for us. We both have a common understanding of our academic commitments, and studying together provided a common goal for us to stay focused. We decided to pursue the Postgraduate programme to advance personally, boost our self-confidence and make a difference in the workforce," added Narayan.

Narayan, who has set his sight on becoming a School Principal, encouraged new and prospective students to keep working towards their goals as he believes that "success is not always destined, it is determined."

Age is no barrier to getting a degree: Reddy

Ashika Vikashni Reddy is the epitome of hard work, dedication and commitment. Her academic success is nothing more than a fairy tale journey, as she had to overcome enormous challenges in life to accomplish her desires.

The forty-year-old recently graduated from Fiji National University's (FNU), College of Humanities and Education (CHE) with a Post Graduate Diploma in Education.

Reddy, a Home Economics teacher at Drasa Secondary School in Lautoka, vividly remembers the immense difficulties she faced from childhood which significantly delayed her academic achievements.

At the tender age of 11, she faced the most challenging period of her life when her parents separated.

Both parents were not willing to take responsibility for her and her sibling. However, her uncle (father's brother) who was visually impaired, took over the responsibility to provide shelter and support to them. Reddy said that living with relatives who themselves were not financially stable was not an easy scenario.

"The pain of attaining no proper tertiary qualification and a professional working career kept haunting me, but fortunately, this was not hidden from my husband," she said.

15 years after leaving secondary school, Reddy finally got the opportunity to enter university with full support from her spouse and two children.

In 2014, FNU allowed her to make her dream a reality when she enrolled in the foundation studies programme at Natabua Campus, Lautoka.

After completing her foundation studies a year later, she was accepted by FNU to pursue Bachelor of Education Secondary majoring in Home Economics.



Ashika Reddy with her husband Sanjay Goundar and children.

At this stage, the challenge was the significant age difference between her and the other full-time students who were fresh from secondary school.

"I was 35 years old, and it was embarrassing for me at times to adjust with a classmate who was less than 20 years old. Also adapting to the study mode after such a long break was initially a significant challenge for me.

"However, with the determination to succeed, I managed to overcome all hurdles, plus the support from my family and continuous motivation from the lecturers at FNU became my strengths."

"In four years, I completed my degree programme. Becoming a civil servant was nothing more than a miracle

for me."

"After completing my undergraduate in 2018, I became very determined that my academic journey will not stop," she said.

Reddy said she thoroughly enjoyed her studies throughout her time at FNU.

"I've met some great friends, and the University staff have helped me achieve everything I wanted," she said.

Reddy's advice to mature students is "you're never too old to go to University."

She is now enrolled in the Masters in Education programme at FNU.

Maharaj acknowledges the man behind her success



Graduating from the Fiji National University (FNU) earlier this month, Sangeeta Maharaj (Pictured) attributed her success to her husband Nilesh Maharaj, who always encouraged her to pursue her dreams.

It was the same encouragement from her husband, which kept her going. Several years down the track, Maharaj has finished her Bachelor of Science with Graduate Certificate in Education (Food and Nutrition and Apparel and Textile) and Post Graduate Diploma in Education from the University of the South Pacific and recent Post Graduate Diploma in Food Science and Technology from FNU.

Born and raised in Labasa, Maharaj attended Vuo Bhartiya School before moving to All Saints Secondary School. Her aspirations and ambitions brought her to Suva in 2001. Maharaj completed her University studies whilst being married.

"Parents have always been supportive of their children. I'm also lucky to have a husband who has been the strength, motivation and the best cheerleader of my achievements. My parents Kamta Prasad and Mridula Prasad have always been my pillar of strength, but my husband is the man behind all the success in my life," she mentioned.

"My husband has let me venture out into my dream world and has allowed me to become who I am today. Apart from the inspiration, he has also assisted me financially," Maharaj added.

A Home Economics teacher by profession, Maharaj is one of the pioneer graduates of the Post Graduate Diploma in Food Science and Technology programme

offered by the FNU's, College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST).

She chose FNU because it is the only university that best met her needs and according to the mother of two, it was exciting to be part of an intake of the first group of students to have studied this programme.

"It enabled me to have an in-depth knowledge and skills in addressing challenges associated with food processing, food safety, food quality and health," Maharaj commented.

The school teacher further stated that FNU prepared her well, and the lecturers and tutors also played a valuable part.

"As a home economics teacher, what I learnt, I use it constantly. It was amazing to be educated by people who have vast knowledge in their field. I cherish my time at university. Hopefully, I will return to study at FNU to keep developing as a teacher."

Maharaj aspires to study Masters in Food Science and Technology in the future.

She shared some sage words of advice for working mothers who are thinking of starting out or already on their study journey.

"Always remember that there is nothing impossible for a woman to achieve. Strive hard and make your loved ones proud."

Pharmacy graduate reflects on her university experience

“Never give up – no matter how big a problem is or how many doors close as there will always be a solution to the problem and a new door opening if you have the will to strive towards your goals.”

This has been the mantra behind Shinal Shivangni Kumar’s success, who recently graduated in the Bachelor of Pharmacy programme from Fiji National University’s (FNU) College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS).

Despite having to overcome financial constraints as Kumar was a private student, she worked persistently and passionately towards completing the programme with flying colours within the duration of the course, i.e., four years.

The 25-year-old also had to change certain aspects of her personality and thoughts towards education to perform well in school as she described herself as a ‘procrastinator’.

“I am grateful to my parents, brother and sister-in-law, for supporting me financially and being my guiding light throughout my education journey. My friends have always inspired me to study hard and achieve my goals.”

“I would also like to mention Joshila Lal who is an amazing lecturer at CMNHS – she has always inspired all her students, including me, to be a good pharmacist and has gone above and beyond to mould us in that way.”

Kumar described her student-life experiences at FNU as amazing and fulfilling. Her most cherished university moments revolve around her friends Fahima Khan and Shivneel Sharma.

“Our study sessions in the bure or the common room of the hostel, our fun and laughter in between those study sessions, our struggles to finish assignments on time and to conquer each year of pharmacy studies together will forever be the happy memories of my student life. We have studied in every corner of Pasifika Campus, and now when I recall those days, I miss them dearly.”

“I also cherish those moments in class when my lecturer Joshila Lal would pose a question to the students, and we would give our opinions and views on it one at a time – I miss sitting in class and listening to everyone.”

When asked why she chose this field of studies, Kumar explained: “because I



wanted to make a difference in people’s lives and this choice of profession is the best way to achieve this dream as pharmacists are among the several first-line health care workers, who work diligently to aid in the treatment and recovery of all individuals.”

The former Mahatma Gandhi Memorial High School student is currently a Pharmacy Intern at Tappoo City Chemist.

She mentioned that the most rewarding moment of being a Pharmacist is when patients or customers acknowledge and give feedback on your recommendations regarding their health conditions.

“Their positive comments just makes my day. The most interesting aspect of working in a pharmacy for me is interacting with patients/customers daily whether it be to counsel patients appropriately regarding their medications or providing them nonpharmacological advice or just listening to what they have to say.”

“I love being a Pharmacist because of the impact I can have on my patient’s lives through my medicine recommendations. I also learn new things daily, which is why I am excited to go to work every morning.”

Kumar recommends students to enrol in the Bachelor of Pharmacy programme as according to her, utilizing the knowledge of medications to solve clinical and practical problems in class, which would later be experienced in practice, is a surreal experience.

“Studying the Bachelor of Pharmacy programme at CMNHS is a great experience. Learning about the human body, all the different kinds of ailments and several aspects of the medications used for the treatment of these diseases is remarkably interesting,” Kumar added.

Kumar’s typical workday as a Pharmacy Intern

My workday begins with sanitizing and cleaning the pharmacy, after which I get the opportunity to indulge in my obsessive-compulsive side and neatly arrange the shelves. Then I would replenish my shelves with the appropriate items and jot down any low-in stock products. When prescriptions are received, I help the pharmacist check the prescription and ensure it is correct, if it is not, we contact the doctor and rectify any anomalies. If it is correct, we prepare the necessary labels, pack the medication, and check it. The next part is to dispense the medication to the patient with appropriate counselling and ensure that the patient understands what is to be done. I also attend to customers/patients seeking advice regarding over the counter products for minor ailments, or any other advice. On certain days I help with ordering the medication, receiving the pharmacy stock, entering it into the system and pricing and shelving of these products.

Every day I get the opportunity to make a difference in several people’s lives, whether by just smiling and saying hello as they walk up to the counter or having a lengthy discussion about their medications’ proper use.

Batai family receives a posthumous certificate



The late Ilaisa Batai’s family surrounds his mother Kelera, who received his graduation certificate posthumously from CMNHS Associate Dean Research Dr Donald Wilson.

The mood at Fiji National University’s (FNU) Tamavua Campus turned sombre as the mother and family of the late Ilaisa Demeniko Batai entered to receive Batai’s postgraduate certificate posthumously.

Batai, a former Nursing graduate from FNU’s College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS), pursued further studies and completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Eye Care.

The late Batai was a registered nurse and worked at various hospital and health centres around the country. He passed away in November last year.

His mother, Kelera Batai, was emotional as she donned a graduation gown and received the postgraduate certificate from FNU’s Acting Dean at the time, Dr Donald Wilson, on behalf of her son.

“It hurts. My son should be here today, receiving this certificate and celebrating with his classmates,” she said softly.

“His absence in our home and our family is felt. We had to mentally prepare ourselves to come today because we know how much this would mean to him as he always knew the value of education.”

“As a mother, I feel both pride and pain right now.”

Batai, as family, friends and colleagues fondly called him, was described as humble, helpful and the ‘right-hand man’ by his mother.

“As the eldest of four siblings, he always helped me around the house, and he always made sure his siblings and I were comfortable and in good health.”

“His siblings now realise that they have big shoes to fill. Batai was a good role model.”

Batai was in the right profession as he had a big heart and was always looking out for others, his mother said.

“Whenever I would begin to feel sick, he would tell me to get ready, so we could go to the hospital,” she said through tears.

“He would do the same to his siblings and encourage them with uplifting words.”

“Sometimes, I can still hear his voice telling me to eat on time, drink a lot of water and take care of myself.”

The Batai family said they would honour their late son and brother’s memory by upholding the values he personified and looking out for each other.

Double celebration – couple graduate with a Postgraduate Diploma in Education



Pravineshwar and Sagrika Deo.

Huband and wife duo Pravineshwar and Sagrika Deo were elated to graduate together with a Postgraduate Diploma in Education from the Fiji National University's (FNU), College of Humanities and Education (CHE).

The two were part of the hundreds of graduates from the Class of 2020 that collected their certificates in Suva last month.

Pravineshwar was born and raised in Dreketi, Vanua Levu, with four siblings in a farming community. He had always dreamed of being a teacher.

"I would always admire my teachers and decided early on that I wanted to be one as well. I would imagine myself teaching one day," shared Pravineshwar.

Sagrika, on the other hand, was born and raised in Nausori and is an only child. Her father passed away while her mother was five months pregnant.

"My mother raised me as a single parent, and I know that was difficult, but she worked very hard to provide for me. I respect her a lot. It was my mother's dream for me to be a teacher, and I wished to fulfil her wishes; thus, becoming a teacher became my dream too," she shared.

Tertiary Life and Career

After completing year 13 in Labasa Sangam College,

Pravineshwar moved to Lautoka to study Higher Education Diploma in Education (Primary) at FNU's Natabua Campus in 2013.

"Leaving home was difficult, but I knew that I needed to take this journey to fulfil my dreams," said Pravineshwar.

"I made new friends, which made it easier for me to adjust and not miss my family too much. Looking back, I would say I enjoyed my days at FNU, especially as an undergraduate student. It has also made me very independent."

He graduated in 2015 and was posted to Rishikul Primary School as an Assistant Teacher. Since then, he has been teaching at the same school.

"I started teaching Year Four at Rishikul Primary School. After two years, I was given Year Six, and most likely that will continue this year too," said Pravineshwar.

While teaching, he continued his education as an in-service student and graduated with a Bachelor of Education (Primary) from FNU in 2018.

"I am proud to be where I am today. I come from a low-income family, and growing up, I learned to value education from a very young age and its role in alleviating poverty. I would cut sugarcane and work on our farm during the breaks. I must say that even though we were poor, my parents worked very hard to provide for us. For

this, I am forever grateful."

Sagrika completed high school at Rishikul Sanatan College, after which she moved to Lautoka to pursue further studies at FNU Natabua Campus. She enrolled in the Bachelor of Education (Primary) programme in 2013.

"Being an only child, I was close to my mother, and leaving her for my studies was very hard for me. I made friends quickly and was able to adjust with regular contact with my mother," said Sagrika.

She graduated in 2017 and started teaching at Rishikul Primary School.

"I was given Year Four to teach, and after a year, I started teaching Year Seven."

"I enjoyed my time at FNU. It was a good learning environment, and the lecturers were amazing with an abundance of teaching experience and a wealth of knowledge to share with their students. They were also very supportive and always there to assist when we needed."

Sagrika and Pravineshwar met at FNU and became friends. Their friendship bloomed, and they got married in 2017 while both of them were teaching at Rishikul Primary School.

After getting married, the couple enrolled in the Postgraduate Diploma in Education programme at FNU as in-service students and graduated together in January 2021.

"FNU has provided us with a foundation to build our careers. FNU's Education programmes are excellent as both Lautoka Teachers College (LTC), and Fiji College of Advanced Education (FCAE) were known to be teacher producing institutions," the couple shared.

In addition to acknowledging their parents, both of them thanked their lecturer and mentor, Satish Chand.

Family life, Interests and Advice

Pravineshwar and Sagrika live in Suva with their six-month-old daughter. Pravineshwar loves to play soccer in his free time while Sagrika spends her free time reading.

"My husband plays soccer occasionally while I like to read; however, since we had our daughter, we are mostly spending all of our free time with her," shared Sagrika.

Their advice to current and future students is to study hard but try to enjoy student life.

"Your education is a pathway to your career. Study hard, focus on your goals. At the same time, remember that student life comes only once; therefore, you must enjoy as well and create memories that will last you a lifetime," said Sagrika.

Pravineshwar's advice to future teachers is to be humble.

"As teachers, you need to be very humble and friendly. Students look up to you to provide them with the best education possible and mould them into good individuals. They should be able to talk to you and not be afraid of you," said Pravineshwar.

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 produced by the University Marketing and Communications team. For views or comments please email mprc@fnu.ac.fj or contact 3394000.

Publisher: Fiji National University | Editor: Ranbeer Singh | Design & Layout: Shelvin Naidu | Division Head: Director Marketing and Communications Jenies Mudiliar
Writers: Kalpana Kaajal, Shireen Lata, Charlene Lanyon, Salesni Chaudhary & Sharon Chand

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