

FNU NIKUA



ISSUE NO. 6 | JUNE 2022



Nurturing Aspirations



LEARN, EDUCATE
AND GROW AT FNU

REDDY EXCELS
AT FNU



Learn, Educate and Grow at FNU

As the Fiji National University (FNU) heads toward the second half of the academic year, it does so with a great sense of accomplishment, excitement and anticipation for the term ahead.

In the first half of the year, the University welcomed our students back on campus for face-to-face learning; provided students with the necessary support services needed to enhance their academic studies; opened new facilities such as the state-of-the-art FNU Sports and Wellness Centre for our students, staff and the FNU community; renewed and formalised partnerships with various stakeholders such as the Pacific Disability Forum, Sugar Research Institute of Fiji, Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) Pacific Agriculture Scholarships and Support Programme (PASS), Telecom Fiji Ltd, University of Wollongong, Oklahoma State University and the University of Auckland; and set the wheels in motion for the establishment of the Monash University-FNU Pacific Island Countries (PICs) Climate Change Research Centre (CCRC).

The University continuously evolves and enhances its delivery of learning, teaching and research to ensure all our students receive an accessible, inclusive and affordable education. Students and those interested in pursuing tertiary education have the opportunity to Apply for Semester 2 studies at FNU.

Study programmes

Our mission is to support the economic and social development of Fiji through relevant and high-quality education and training. The University offers a wide range of programmes through our College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF), College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies (CBHTS), College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST), College of Humanities and Education (CHE) and College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS), National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) and the Fiji Maritime Academy (FMA).

FNU has multiple entry pathways, which provide students with the option of studying at the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) level (Certificate or Diploma) or in Higher Education which consists of Degree, Postgraduate, Masters and Doctorate (PhD) studies. This ensures that every local, regional and international student has a chance to achieve their academic ambitions right here at Fiji's national university.

For those in the workforce, I'm happy to state that our programmes allow students to upgrade their

qualifications, with flexible class times and online sessions enabling students to balance work and studies.

Our facilities

FNU has upgraded its campus facilities over the years, with modern Learning Commons available for student discussions and study sessions. With a seating capacity of 680, FNU has the largest lecture theatre in Fiji which is located at our Natabua campus in Lautoka. Each of our campuses has facilities such as libraries, computer labs, discussion rooms and practical labs and workshops to complement students' classroom-based learning.

As the national institution, FNU has a special interest role in one of the Pacific's historical professions and this is evident in the construction of a three-storey teaching and research building at our Fiji Maritime Academy (FMA). I'm pleased to also mention that our four-storey CBHTS building at the Nasinu campus is progressing well and both are expected to be completed before August.

FNU has also expanded its tertiary training and education services in the North through the new Naduna campus in Labasa. The Campus opened for Semester 1 operations in March this year and provides students in the North with a conducive and consolidated campus learning environment.

TVET courses that were introduced this year at the campus include courses in Cookery, Baking and Patisserie, Housekeeping & Accommodation Operations, Office Assistance and Restaurant Services, plus the Diploma in Hotel Management, Trade Diploma in Front Office Operations and the Trade Diploma and Bachelor in Hospitality and Hotel Management programmes.

Our Naduna campus comprises a Carpentry Workshop, Plumbing Workshop, Mechanical Workshop, Electrical Workshop and a Training Kitchen, alongside a Modern Library with collaborative learning spaces, Computer Labs, Classrooms, a Canteen and Central Academic and Administrative Offices. Over the coming terms, FNU also plans to introduce new courses from CAFF and NTPC at the campus.

TVET studies

As a dual-sector University, FNU remains true to its historical role of providing TVET graduates that address labour market needs.

For generations, our colleges, academy and centre have educated the country's doctors, dentists and nurses, its teachers, creative artists, accountants and lawyers, its engineers, plumbers, tile layers and

seafarers, entrepreneurs, quantity surveyors and architects, land surveyors, tourism, culinary and hospitality specialists, computer scientists, mechanics, carpenters and electricians and agriculture, fisheries and forestry experts.

Our TVET courses offered in Certificate III, Certificate IV and Diploma levels are also supported through the Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLs). The Fijian Government has provided 5,000 placements for Fijians to undertake the opportunity to gain skills and qualification in a TVET field of their choice and contribute to the economy upon completion as trade workers and/or entrepreneurs.

Students and those eligible for TSLs-funded studies must have successfully completed Year 12 with a minimum mark of 200/400 or completed Level I and II studies from the Technical College of Fiji or equivalent institutions.

Study at FNU

Students, communities and organisations who wish to learn more about our programmes, minimum requirements and application details can reach contact our Outreach team at outreach@fnu.ac.fj

Our team will be available to visit schools, villages and business houses to help you decide on a suitable study and entry pathway that is aligned with your career aspirations.

As we kickstart our Semester 2, 2022 Enrolment Drive campaign, prospective students are also encouraged to visit our website on www.fnu.ac.fj or follow our social media platforms to keep updated.

I look forward to welcoming all the new students onto our campuses over the coming weeks.

Vinaka



Dr William May
Acting Vice-Chancellor





Fiji Airways Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Andre Viljoen (left), FNU Acting Vice-Chancellor Dr William May (middle) and CBHTS Dean Professor Arun Elias at the MoU signing.



Fiji Airways to offer training OPPORTUNITIES TO FNU STUDENTS

Students from the Fiji National University (FNU) will have an opportunity to undertake on-the-job training attachments at Fiji Airways following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

FNU's Acting Vice-Chancellor, Dr William May said the agreement is aligned towards the University's Pillar One Education for Employability as outlined in the FNU Strategic Plan 2021-2026.

FNU is committed to producing work-ready graduates at undergraduate and post-graduate levels with the skills, knowledge, competencies, aptitudes and behaviours necessary to succeed in a competitive jobs market, including by establishing new businesses. An entrepreneurial mindset and a readiness to meet the challenges and opportunities of Industries.

"The two organisations have welcomed a new dawn in the history of the organisations where the national carrier, Fiji Airways, and Fiji National University have strengthened their relationship for the common goal of helping in the economic growth and prosperity of Fijians with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding," Dr May said.

"This partnership is a testament to the commitment of the two organisations in ensuring employment opportunities for the students. The tourism industry is a major player in Fiji's economy, and Fiji Airways is

playing a pivotal role in the transportation of tourists to and from our shores. On the other hand, FNU is committed to producing highly qualified graduates in the tourism and hospitality sector."

Students who are enrolled in more than 15 study programmes would be able to be part of the FNU Work Experience Programme with Fiji Airways. These programmes include food and beverage, tourism and hospitality management, human resources management, industrial and employment relations, management and public administration, international business management, marketing, finance, accounting, banking, customs, economics, engineering, law, journalism and multimedia.

Fiji Airways Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Andre Viljoen said the company was pleased to have a partnership with the Fiji National University.

"Our pre-pandemic partnership saw many graduates join various business units at Fiji Airways, most working their way into full-time positions. Fiji Airways is a firm believer in providing our young Fijians with a platform to gain industry-based, hands-on experience in order to prepare them for the workforce," Viljoen said.

"At Fiji Airways, we develop the skills and talent of our employees to make them the best at what they do, while at the same time imparting our ethos in terms of dedication, commitment, and productivity."

"We see FNU as an integral partner in moulding young minds to become productive members of the workforce."

College of Business, Hospitality, and Tourism Studies (CBHTS) Dean Professor Arun Elias said the signing of MoU will help both organisations achieve their strategic goals.

"CBHTS considers Fiji Airways as a strategic partner not just in learning and teaching but also in our research agenda," Prof Elias said.

"Therefore, the signing of the MoU is strategically important to the CBHTS. It is also a step towards realising the five strategic priorities of the college."

The national airline also held a recruitment drive at FNU's Namaka Campus in Nadi, which provided selected students with an opportunity to undergo preliminary interviews.

FNU's CBHTS also held a Dean's Coffee with Leaders series with Viljoen as the Chief Guest.

The discussion was centred around the Fiji Airways' operation before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, including Viljoen's transformational leadership and the company's accounting practices.

PARENT APPLAUDS FNU ON PARTNERSHIP



Proud father Abhivas Sharma accompanied his daughter Sai Geeta Sharma to the Fiji Airways recruitment drive at the Fiji National University's (FNU), Namaka Campus in Nadi to provide support and encouragement.

"I am proud of FNU for providing the best education and facilities for my daughter to study in. The University genuinely cares about our daughters and sons, which is why they have set up all avenues, particularly with Fiji Airways, for our children to undergo an interview and, if selected, do work attachments," he said.

"This is a very good initiative, and coming from a rural area, we are not well educated, so we asked around for advice and received positive feedback for my daughter to join FNU."

"I struggled to provide a better education for my daughters, and I had to work on a sugarcane farm to make ends meet. I am glad both of my daughters are doing well, and this is another stepping stone for Sai, who is now ready to enter the workforce."

Under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between FNU and Fiji Airways, the University will provide suitable and qualified students to Fiji Airways as candidates to participate in the Work Experience Programme as interns. The national airline carrier will also provide appropriate work experience on the job training and mentorship to suitability qualified students.

Former Xavier College scholar Sharma, (pictured

far left) is currently enrolled at FNU in the Bachelor of Professional Accounting programme.

"I am honoured to have been chosen for an interview by Fiji Airways, being interviewed by such a reputable organisation is an accomplishment for me. I've always wanted to work for Fiji Airways, but we'll see what the future holds," the Ba resident said.

"I learned from my lecturers about this interview and the golden opportunity provided for anyone interested in working for Fiji Airways. I aspire to be a qualified accountant in the future, and I am working towards that goal."

Sharma, 19, believes that life is about seizing opportunities.

"We left Ba at 9am this morning for the interview with my dad and other family members who came to support me."

"Family is everything to me, and their love and presence meant a lot on my interview day."

"My father has been my biggest motivation because he has sacrificed a lot for us, and we have gone through a lot of difficulties."

"He was always there to protect us and support us financially in any way we needed."





PURSUE TVET STUDIES AT FNU

The Fiji National University (FNU) is a dual-sector university offering a growing range of qualifications in both technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education stream of learning. The University offers programmes to our local, regional and international students that range from certificate to doctorate levels. Since its establishment in 2010, and through the legacies of some of FNU's founding institutions, providing technical training has been a core and historical function of the University. In addition, FNU is also focused on developing both the technical skills and competencies as well as 'soft skills' like critical thinking and teamwork, to enable our graduates to succeed in a fast-changing labour market.

At FNU, we are focused on ensuring that our students are not just highly employable the day after

graduation, but who can continue learning during their working lives.

TVET aids economic recovery

Fiji is an upper middle-income country that is on the path to recovery, with the economy slowly steadying itself. We are seeing the agriculture, construction and service sectors leading the charge in rebuilding and there is also a demand for skilled carpenters, plumbers, electricians, chefs, cooks and front office hotel staff – all of whom would be TVET graduates. As economies develop, there will be a growing need for both TVET and higher education graduates.

Our Goal

At FNU, we understand the need for young people to be empowered with opportunities of acquiring quality education, skills training and a curriculum that

encourages innovation and sustainable learning. This aligns with our strategic vision of providing a positive and enriching student experience and education for employability. The University works closely with our industry and education partners to formulate and offer relevant programmes, address industry needs and standards and ensure our graduates are highly skilled and employable. We also work closely with educational agencies to conduct regular programme reviews and accreditation. This further strengthens our learning and teaching delivery.

Fijian Government's focus and support

Fiji is making technical and vocational training as attractive as any other academic field of study so there is an increase in suitably qualified graduates in the future. This is both a pragmatic and practical approach that will assist in meeting the labour demands a little quicker than the conventional academic pursuits. Fiji, like other countries, relies on TVET to enable and empower people to cope with pressures such as poverty, climate change adaptation and skilled migration.

TVET placements at FNU

TVET studies are deeply ingrained in the foundations of the Fijian Government's education plan and this has been clearly demonstrated with the allocation of 5000 places for TVET studies at FNU through TSLS (Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service) support. The Government's vision of investing significant resources to attract brilliant young minds to the TVET cadre of learning is commendable.

Those who wish to pursue a TVET programme at FNU and study through a placement from TSLS can choose from a range of Certificate III, Certificate IV and Diploma level qualifications.

Students eligible for TSLS-funded studies must have successfully completed Year 12 with a minimum mark of 200/400 or completed Level I and II studies from the Technical College of Fiji or equivalent institutions.

Students are encouraged to register their applications with TSLS whilst applying for their TVET studies at FNU.

MAILE JOINS SWIRE SHIPPING

Luisa Maile never imagined that she would one day work on board an international shipping vessel.

The 23-year-old was one of 11 students from the Fiji National University's (FNU), Fiji Maritime Academy (FMA) who was recently recruited by Swire Shipping.

The second-year Diploma in Nautical Science student was overwhelmed with her selection and was grateful to all those involved in her journey.

"For us cadets, this is such a big opportunity. If we join a local vessel, our COC (Certificate of Competency) will be limited locally, but if we join a foreign vessel, it's an unlimited COC. This would enable us to sail onboard any ship plying worldwide. Needless to say, this makes it such a great opportunity," she said.

After being notified of her selection, Maile (*pictured right*) had delayed informing her parents, having remembered their disapproval when she first decided to join the Academy.

"Initially, my family were a bit hesitant as the maritime industry is male-dominated, however, they became



supportive after learning that an increasing number of women are now entering this industry globally."

"I think they will be happy about my selection, but I know my father will be a little upset that I will be gone for a long time."

Fueled by her dreams to travel to her home island in

Ogea, Lau, Maile opted for a non-conventional route.

"I have never been to my home island. I took Nautical Science because I wanted to do something for a change. Instead of being a passenger going back to the islands, I wanted to be one of the masters to bring back a vessel."

She added that her experience at FNU provided her with the necessary skills to excel in her endeavours.

"This opportunity means so much to me. I can finally obtain that COC that I have been trying to get for a long time and it makes me so happy to know that my dreams will be realised soon."

Prior to her selection, Maile was serving her sea time requirement with the Interlink vessel, Westerland.

Having spent 11 months with the shipping company, Maile has relished the work experience and now calls the sea her home.

"I adapted because I spent most of my time on board, so now when I am ashore, I miss life at sea and prefer life out there than on land."

Maile encourages more females to enrol at the Fiji National University and pursue a career in the maritime industry.

LEARNING NEVER STOPS FOR SHARMA

Ameet Kumar Sharma always had a desire to secure a stable career in the trade field and this motivated him to study Certificate in Cabinet Making and Joinery at the Fiji National University's (FNU), National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC).

"Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) provides good career opportunities to individuals and also opens up avenues for them to become entrepreneurs," Sharma mentioned.

"By joining the trade field, you will learn the skills for life. Once you master one trade, you can learn other trades and become multi-skilled and you will be in high demand. If you acquire trade skills, then you can also be your own boss, and your tools are your assets to earn money. You can continue working after retiring or when you lose a job, and construction work will never end."

Sharma (*pictured right*) said life had taught him many lessons, and he is proud of where he is today with

his mother's blessing.

"She is the sweetest person and the most kind-hearted woman I have had in my life. She is creative, helpful, and loving in nature. She is a market vendor and has worked hard to win many battles for herself and I," he said.

"I chose to study cabinet making and joinery because I love to work with timbers and board, which I used to design in my young days. Every day, there are new things to learn in this field," he said.

"After completing my studies, I joined WoodQuest joinery as a Project manager. Some major projects completed under my supervision were HFC Bank, Bred Bank, and the Valelevu courthouse," Sharma said.

Sharma is currently employed at the Bank Of Baroda as a service staff, where he undertakes various jobs using skill and knowledge.

He is also pursuing a Certificate in Banking from FNU.





SWAMY DEFIES ALL ODDS

Dyvia Swamy needed close attention and assistance to go about her daily routine early in her life. Fortunately, this changed after she underwent a successful life-changing surgery when she was 11 years old.

Prior to this, she could not walk, as she was born physically disabled. The little sense of independence gained from having the ability to walk, although supported by a walker, changed her life forever.

Now at 23 years old, Swamy (pictured right) is close to completing her Certificate III in Office Assistant at the Fiji National University (FNU), something she had difficulty fathoming while growing up but was always determined to achieve.

With a good support system, Swamy has broken stereotypical perceptions of persons with disabilities and has already landed interviews for employment positions.

Relentless in her pursuit of a better life, Swamy has never let her disability dissuade her from completing

her goals. “When I started walking, it was a very big thing,” she said.

“Even though I can’t walk normally, at least I can still walk. I can do things by myself. I can even help with the housework. It gives me a degree of independence.”

“For someone who only reached class four, coming to university was a great achievement for me.”

Swamy had taken vocational classes at the National Council for Persons with Disabilities complex prior to joining FNU.

“My mother pushed me to go to University. She was the one that said I could do it. I was taking computing at the vocational centre and they saw that I was good and sent me here.”

With four more units to complete her programme, Swamy attests it has not been a smooth sailing journey, especially living away from her family who are in Labasa.

“The transition to University from the Vocational Centre was challenging because I was coming into a whole new environment. The Centre was familiar to me

because we were all the same, in a sense. I had never done units like accounting, so it was different.”

“I am grateful however that the lecturers here are helpful and that my friends have been supportive. If I am not able to go to classes, the lecturers come to me and so while it has not been easy, it has been a great learning experience so far.”

She added that although there has been progress in realising the rights of persons with disabilities, greater awareness is still needed to change the mindsets of individuals.

“When I was on my way to a job interview, I was stopped by a man who asked me why I walked like this and if I was asking for money. I was surprised at the mentality that some people still had. So we must change people’s mindsets. We are not always asking for money. Some of us are trying to live independently,” she said.

Swamy added she was grateful for the University’s efforts in ensuring accessibility and an encouraging and empowering environment for persons with disabilities.

CMNHS COMMENCES INDUSTRY OUTREACH



CMNHS staff and Ministry of Health and Medical Services representatives during the outreach session.

Collaborating closely with industry partners and stakeholders allows universities to formulate and offer relevant programmes, skills and qualifications and ensures that students are competent and workforce-ready upon graduation.

At the Fiji National University (FNU), this is standard practice as its Colleges and Centres work closely with relevant organisations in the design and implementation of our courses.

Maintaining these working relationships are important to ensure the University receives constructive feedback on its services and graduates, as well as keep abreast with industry needs and standards.

To this end, FNU’s College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences’ (CMNHS) conducted the University’s first Industry Outreach Activity (IOA) this year with a discussion session by the School of Nursing and representatives from the Ministry of Health and Medical Services.

CMNHS Acting Dean, Dr Donald Wilson said the dialogue centred around the College’s Certificate in Enrolled Nursing (Level 4) programme.

“The discussions were timely given the current situation faced in the nursing sector,” Dr Wilson said.

“We were able to highlight issues from both the College and the ministry that needs to be addressed regarding the course.”

“It is important that we continuously have these interactive discussions with stakeholders regarding all our technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education programmes to ensure we are meeting the industry needs with highly-skilled graduates.”

Ministry representatives included Chief Nursing and Midwife Officer (CNMO) and Registrar to the Fiji Nursing Council, Colleen Wilson, Director of Nursing St Giles Hospital, Miliakere Nasorovakawalu, Acting Director of Nursing Central Division, Keleti Wainiqolo and Acting Director of Nursing CWM Hospital, Luisa Wauca.

Acting Head of School Nursing, Talica Lewanavanua said the nursing faculty valued the insights and unique contributions made by stakeholders for the benefit and enhanced education of future nurses.

FNU’s remaining Colleges will also undertake IOAs with their respective stakeholders over the coming weeks, with a particular focus on the TVET courses offered at FNU.

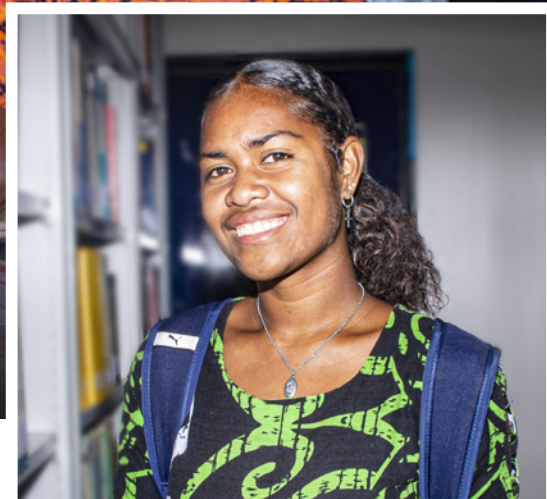
Industry partners who may wish to schedule discussions regarding their respective TVET sectors can email the following:

College	Contact Person	Email
College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF)	TVET Coordinator, Esava Tabua	esava.tabua@fnu.ac.fj
College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies (CBHTS)	Acting Associate Dean TVET, Eric Jioje	ad-tvet@fnu.ac.fj
College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST)	Acting Associate Dean TVET, Vasenai Kereni	aad-tvet@fnu.ac.fj
College of Humanities and Education (CHE)	Acting Associate Dean TVET, Jerry Wong	aadtvet-che@fnu.ac.fj
College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS)	Academic Officer, Seruwaia Tuitoga	seruwaia.tuitoga@fnu.ac.fj





Naduna Campus provides AN ENRICHING STUDENT EXPERIENCE



On most days, first-year Bachelor of Education (Primary) student Salome Sovea could be found in a corner of the Fiji National University's (FNU), Naduna Campus library conducting research for her assignments or studying for examinations.

Located 10 minutes from Labasa Town, the Naduna Campus opened for Semester 1 studies this year following refurbishment works made to the existing facility.

"The campus provides us with a quiet learning environment and that really helps with our studies," Sovea (*pictured far right*) said. "We also have a canteen and grounds available where students can participate in physical education activities and sporting games with others."

"Since the campus has lecture rooms, labs and engineering workshops, the students get to interact and network with our peers who are studying in other programmes."

The Naduna Campus has separate specialised workshops for Carpentry, Plumbing, Mechanical and Electrical study programmes, a Training Kitchen and a modern Library with collaborative learning spaces, Computer Labs, Classrooms, a Canteen and Central Academic and Administrative Offices.

FNU Chancellor and Chair of Council, Tessa Price, recently visited the campus, alongside other Council members and the University's Senior Leadership Team to view the learning and teaching facilities.

Price highlighted that the recently-opened campus in the North highlighted the commitment and confidence

in the calibre and potential of the University's students in the North. "As the national University, the FNU Council has high expectations of where we envision the institution to be in the next few years," Price said.

"FNU has the ability to transform lives and economies and with the continued support of the Fijian Government and the FNU Council, we will continue to help improve living conditions, assist many to achieve their academic aspirations, and take tertiary education in the country to greater heights."

FNU Acting Vice-Chancellor, Dr William May said new programmes would be offered at the campus, with medium to long-term initiatives in place for learning and teaching enhancement.

TEKAVA DREAMS OF BECOMING A TEACHER

Tuvalu native Pulafigu Tekava described leaving her tiny nation to live and study in Fiji as "bittersweet". Although she was upset about leaving her family, Tekava (*pictured right*) said she was also excited to meet new people and grow as a person in her pursuit of becoming a primary school teacher.

After finishing her secondary education at Motufoua Secondary School in Tuvalu, Tekava applied to further her studies at FNU.

Twenty-two-year-old Tekava is a final-year Bachelor of Education (Primary) student at the Fiji National University's (FNU), Natabua campus in Lautoka.

"Being the second youngest in the family, leaving home was a very emotional time. I encountered a few hurdles but didn't face any major hiccups while enrolling at FNU," said Tekava.

"I had found out that FNU's College of Humanities and Education (CHE) is a renowned teacher training institute and also has hostel facilities on campus."

"The Bachelor of Education (Primary) programme offered at FNU is the most comprehensive and broad teaching course. The content provided is exciting and relevant to the teaching field, and I think it will open up many doorways to future career paths," she said.



From a young age, Tekava was passionate about becoming a primary school teacher.

According to Tekava, she enjoys the university experience, especially learning about how children make decisions in an educational setting.

"I like observing children and supporting their learning by fostering their curiosity. I have already been

able to apply skills learnt at FNU in a real environment – having done my practicum and peer teaching assignments, I feel work-ready after leaving FNU."

The significant change that Tekava experienced at the University was that she was able to find friends that have common interests and made her more independent..

"I had moments of homesickness and missed my family, but the amazing thing was that I could video call them anytime, thanks to the free WiFi facilities at the campus."

"Ever since coming to Fiji, I have become self-sufficient and not dependent on anyone, especially when making decisions."

After studying here for several semesters, Tekava said that FNU delivered on its reputation – not just for its academic standards but also for its student support and helpful resources.

"FNU doesn't just provide me with high-quality classes and lecturers who are always helping me overcome my difficulties, it also promotes career events and workshops that help me develop the variety of knowledge and skills I need as a professional."

Tekava's future plans involves undertaking the Master of Education programme at FNU.

FNU PARTNERS WITH MINISTRY TO SHARE INFORMATION

The Fiji National University (FNU) is committed to providing ongoing academic counselling and guidance to career teachers, students, communities, and individuals currently employed in the workforce.

Under the FNU's Strategic Plan 2021-2026, the University strives to produce work-ready graduates at undergraduate and postgraduate levels with the skills, knowledge, competencies, aptitudes, and behaviours necessary to succeed in a competitive job market, including by establishing new businesses.

Hence, the University's Outreach team provides important information to prospective students which assists them to make informed decisions on choosing the right study programmes at FNU to pursue their career aspirations.

The Outreach team, through the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts, recently participated

in a series of virtual information sessions with career teachers from around the country. FNU's Senior Outreach Programmes Officer, Vishal Lal said the career teachers were a vital link between the institution and the prospective students, hence timely and correct information needed to be shared regularly.

"Students find it easier to discuss study opportunities, programmes and other university-related matters with their teachers, which is why FNU is reaching out to the career teachers and sharing important information which they can pass onto the students," Lal said.

The Careers Teachers Workshop will run until the end of July and include career teachers from the 177 secondary schools and more than 500 primary schools in Fiji.

FNU's Outreach team will also visit industries, communities, and schools to talk about the various courses and programmes offered by the University

which can help individuals secure stable careers.

If you want the Outreach team to visit your community, contact us on outreach@fnu.ac.fj or call 3394000 ext: 2896.





MOCELOKULA PERSEVERES IN LAW STUDIES

Four years after switching her tertiary institution and study programme, Talatoka Vusoniua Mocolokula has no regrets and looks forward to graduating from the Fiji National University (FNU) in the coming months.

Mocolokula (*pictured above*), is from Cawaro village, Udu Point in Vanua Levu. She is a final-year Bachelor of Laws (LLB) student completing her last unit at FNU's Nasinu Campus.

She had earlier completed her primary and secondary education at Tacirua Primary School, Suva Grammar School and Laucala Bay Secondary School. After a break from studies, she pursued Year 13 again through the Nabua Matua programme before undertaking her tertiary learning at FNU.

Offered by the College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies (CBHTS), the four-year LLB programme is designed to equip successful graduates with the skills and competency to enter into private practice as a barrister or solicitor. Graduates may also work as corporate lawyers for large firms, legal officers in the public service, community lawyers or in various positions outside the legal profession.

For Mocolokula, taking a chance and listening to her older brother's encouragement was a decision she has benefitted from.

"In 2018, I had already enrolled at another tertiary institution in Geography studies when my older brother Ropate Robi suggested that I also enrol and study Law with him at FNU," she shared.

"I always had an interest in this field of study so without a second thought, I joined my brother at FNU and we have motivated and assisted each other throughout our studies."

"This has been an enriching student journey and despite the obstacles, I am proud to be nearing my academic goal with the help of my brother, family and loved ones."

As a full-time working student, her primary role is being a mother to her two young children.

"It was never easy and smooth sailing for me," she said. "However, over the years I have learnt the importance of time management and balancing my academic, work and family life."

"I've made sacrifices over time to ensure I could complete what was required of me academically and for this, I am grateful to my parents and siblings for helping care for my children while I was completing assignments or studying for an exam. Sometimes, they also accompany me to lectures on campus."

"My biggest joy and blessing is having my kids motivate me and celebrating every little achievement with me. When I've had a stressful day at work or school they would always say the right things to cheer me up."

Whilst reflecting on her highlights of studying at FNU, Mocolokula said this would include the moot assessment that her team won in 2019 and being on the winning side of debate teams during her study.

She was quick to add that she also welcomed and adapted well to studying remotely during the pandemic restrictions.

The youngest of five siblings, Mocolokula said her faith in God was her biggest motivating force, in addition to her parents and family.

"I encourage others not to limit yourself, keep giving your best and even if you fail, you must always get back up and keep trying," she stated.

"Consistency is what takes you anywhere."

Students interested in the LLB or other programmes at FNU can visit our website at www.fnu.ac.fj for course details, minimum entry and application requirements.

Applications for Semester 2 is now open.

FNU STAFF MEMBERS PITCH TOP BUSINESS IDEAS

Fiji National University (FNU) staff members Ram Singh and Vijayta Sharma pitched outstanding business ideas at the inaugural 2022 Ubercamp and were awarded first and second prize respectively.

Singh won the top prize of \$1500 while Sharma the runner-up won \$1000.

The Ubercamp workshop was conducted through a formal application process where successful applicants were selected from undergraduate and graduate students and early-career researchers to pitch their entrepreneurial ideas after successful coaching sessions by experts.

The three-day Ubercamp aimed to prepare people for a business pitch, capture the entrepreneurial mindset, and explore young people's prioritisation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It encourages individuals to use technology and other modern methods and learn new ways to become successful entrepreneurs.

Singh's pitch was on sustainable agriculture and renewable energy. He presented the idea of using agri-photovoltaics in a distributed fashion to reduce the dependence on food imports and make farmers energy independent.

"I developed the pitch after getting the invitation to be part of Ubercamp, and since the topics were linked to the SDGs, I realised that our country, even though we are known for agriculture, 70 per cent of the economy is service-based, and when a pandemic strikes, we struggle. I was thinking about how we can support our agriculture industry to stand on its own and reduce food imports," he said.

Singh, 27, is an assistant instructor at FNU's College of Electronic and Science Technology (CEST).

He is currently enrolled in a Higher Degree by Research programme at FNU.

"I have learnt a lot about how to conduct pitches, and it is quite an eye-opener because you think investors are interested in the finances and how it works. But what it comes down to is the people and their emotions. We should know what they care about and what we care about for the people," Singh (*pictured far right*) said.

"The idea was to present a viable solution that tackles problems of survival with the worsening climate crisis and the increasing risks of global pandemics. The proposition marries solar energy and controlled agriculture. The main issue with traditional solar energy farms is that they hog up a lot of land that would generally be used for farming or housing. The pitch suggests that we can use the same piece of land

to plant crops and harvest solar energy. This type of implementation has several benefits, such as increased yields, more efficient solar panels, and a reduction in our food imports as we can now produce a wider range of produce."

Sharma (*pictured below left*) is a Student Service Coordinator at FNU and said the Ubercamp workshop was beneficial to all participants as it encouraged creativity in terms of generating innovative entrepreneurial ideas.

"I think the camp was an eye-opener for us as we expected something else, but when we attended the workshop, it encouraged our entrepreneurial skills to come out. It has been a good learning experience for all," she said.

"The 90 seconds pitch competition is where we presented the entrepreneurial plan, and in this, we had to focus on why we wanted that idea to happen and the benefits. It was a challenge to deliver the whole business plan in 90 seconds."



"My pitch was on employer-supported childcare facility, as we see that most working parents are struggling to find an affordable, safe, reliable childcare service centre within their vicinity. This is one of the biggest barriers for women in the workforce, as our young mothers struggle to choose kids over work. Thus, it is high time for organisations to realise their corporate social responsibilities and support their human capital by providing in-house childcare facilities."

The FNU 2022 workshop was funded by the Association of Commonwealth Universities, the FNU Students Association and FNU's Research Office.

LOVE FOR ANIMALS LEADS ALEFAIO TO JOIN FNU



Mamere Junior Alefaio, who is originally from Tuvalu, aspires to become an expert in Animal Husbandry after graduating from the Fiji National University (FNU).

Alefaio (*pictured above*) is currently studying Trade Diploma in Animal Husbandry at FNU's, College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF).

The 25-year-old said she is determined to accomplish her academic goal before heading home to contribute to Tuvalu's agriculture sector.

"The journey to study at FNU has been wonderful for me because I feel at home with all of the support and love showed to me by my friends, lecturers and tutors," she explained.

"It's an exciting course for me because it includes animal care, production and management. Many

farmers make their living from animal husbandry."

Alefaio had previously travelled to Fiji to finish her education at John Wesley College before switching to Dudley High School.

"From 2015 to 2018, I lived in Fiji before returning to Tuvalu to finish my final year of studies," she said.

"After graduating from high school, I realised I wanted to work with animals and decided to enrol at the Fiji National University. My grandfather used to work on a piggery farm, and I grew up seeing him work there, which sparked my interest and love for animals," she explained.

"It was a little difficult for me when I first arrived here because of the language barrier, however, that gradually faded and I was able to socialise and make new friends. Fiji is a beautiful place with a rich culture and friendly people. And it feels great to study at FNU.

Alefaio is a second-year student and who in her recreational time enjoys football, rugby, and volleyball. She is also a member of the CAFF volleyball team.

"I have been away from home and family for a while and I miss them terribly. But I know that I need to stay focused on my goals and dreams. To achieve more in life, one must make sacrifices. I am confident that all my sacrifices will contribute to the realisation of my dream."

"Sometimes it is difficult but I'm constantly striving to change and improve myself to be a better person in the future."

"I want to encourage other regional students not to give up easily, despite the challenges of living away from home. Always be open to new ideas and discuss them with your colleagues."

Alefaio hopes to graduate later this year.



Talanoa with our Alumni



SCAN TO REGISTER



REDDY EXCELS AT FNU

at FNU's former Fiji College of Advanced Education, which is now the College of Humanities and Education (CHE).

Reddy graduated with a Diploma in Secondary Teaching majoring in Accounting and Economics and has been a teacher since 2011.

In 2017, she was inspired and motivated by her husband Randhir Raj, to undertake a course of interest and fulfill her dream.

"I had a keen interest in Accounting from a young age and after encouragement from my husband, I decided to become a part-time student at FNU," Reddy recalled. "I enrolled in the Bachelor in Commerce programme majoring in Accounting and Economics."

"To be honest, this was a challenge for me as I had to manage my work, family and studies at the same time. However, I was excited and determined to overcome this and complete my degree."

Offered by the University's College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies (CBHTS), the three-year full-time course provides graduates with a good understanding of accounting principles, financial statements and analysis, management and cost accounting, budgetary control, tax accounting, law and accounting, auditing, accounting standards and corporate reporting and business information systems.

"Through the programme, I also gained knowledge in accounting theory, research methods, business ethics, professional codes of conduct and accounting and accountability of public sector and not-for-profit organisations," Reddy said.

Academic Achievements

"Throughout my studies, the stories of others who had succeeded at FNU inspired me to also achieve the same."

"I was pursuing my dream of gaining qualifications in the field of Accounting at a very flexible and conducive learning environment at FNU and one of my highlights was receiving all A and A+ grades throughout my undergraduate course." Reddy's academic achievements were evident when she received the Pherrus Pty (Fiji) Ltd Prize for Best Student in Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) during the FNU's December 2020 graduation. She was also awarded the TK Jayaraman and Family Annual Prize for Topper in Bachelor of Commerce (Economics).

In 2021, Reddy decided to continue upskilling and enrolled in the Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting.

Upon completion, she was a special award recipient of the Office of the Auditor General

(FIJI) Prize for Best Postgraduate Auditing Student.

"I am equally humbled and proud of these achievements, which were only possible because of the support I have received from lecturers and my family." Reddy said the prize money she received from the three special awards, in addition to the facilities, resources and guidance of her lecturers at FNU, led her to enrol in the Masters in Accounting programme, which she is currently undertaking.

Motivation

"I credit my success to my husband, parents, siblings and the entire Reddy family," she shared with a smile.

"It is always a privilege to know that you have people supporting you in your endeavors."

Words of Wisdom

"Put God and your Parents first in life, and all good things will come your way," Reddy said. "Be honest in everything you do as this is one of the crucial characteristics of your student and work ethic."

Alumni Connect

Graduates of FNU and its former institutions can register to be part of the exclusive Alumni Connect portal and remain connected to their classmates and the University.

Registered alumni can receive news and updates on key University activities, read alumni success and feature articles, scholarship and upskilling opportunities, networking events and professional development and training seminars. To register, please scan the QR code at the top left corner of this page.

Study at FNU

Students interested in studying at FNU can visit our website at www.fnu.ac.fj to learn more about our programmes, minimum entry requirements and the application process.

Those who wish to pursue a technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programme at FNU can also study through placements provided by the Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLs).

Offered through the University's TVET Pasifika, these courses are Certificate III, Certificate IV and Diploma level qualifications.

Students eligible for TSLs-funded studies must have successfully completed Year 12 with a minimum mark of 200/400 or completed Level I and II studies from the Technical College of Fiji or equivalent institutions.

Applications for Semester 2 studies are now open.

As a teacher, Lynett Vinita Reddy is living proof to her students that hard work, dedication and perseverance are valuable traits that enable individuals to achieve their desired goals in life.

The quiet yet determined lady from Labasa, Vanua Levu said hearing about the success stories of others that undertook tertiary studies at the Fiji National University (FNU) prompted her to pursue her academic ambitions.

"I came from a background that wasn't financially stable," Reddy shared. "However, this did not stop my parents from ensuring that my siblings and I received the education we needed to improve our conditions." "Working hard and not giving up is something that was instilled in me from observing the struggles my parents went through and this is my constant source of motivation in life."

"Both my parents worked hard to send me to Labasa College and thereafter supported me in my university studies."

Education

Reddy completed primary school at Naleba Bhartiya School and high school at Naleba College and Labasa College. She then studied

The **FNUNIKUA** is a monthly newsletter which aims to promote the University's activities to the wider community. This newsletter is produced by the Public Relations and Communications team at the Division of Marketing and Communications.

Publisher: Fiji National University | **Editor:** Ranbeer Singh | **Design & Layout:** Vetaia Dakua
Division Head: Director Marketing and Communications, Karen Lobendahn
Writers: Charlene Lanyon, Salesni Chaudhary, Pravin Narain, Kalesi Mele
Contributors: Acting Vice-Chancellor, Dr William May

FNUNIKUA wants to HEAR FROM YOU

FNUNIKUA 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

Published in partnership with



Follow us on

