

FNUUNIKUA



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GROWING *with* Quality Education



FNU WELCOMES
NEW VICE-CHANCELLOR

FNU HELPS KUMAR
REACH HER FULL POTENTIAL



FNU *welcomes* new Vice-Chancellor

The Fiji National University Council, members of the Senior Leadership Team, staff, students and education partners are pleased to welcome the incoming Vice-Chancellor, Professor Lyn Karstadt.

Prof Karstadt will commence her role on 5 September 2022 and makes history as the first female Vice-Chancellor of the national University.

In announcing the new appointment, Chancellor and Chair of the FNU Council, Ms Tessa Price said Professor Karstadt was recruited following an extensive international recruitment process.

“Professor Karstadt has more than 20 years’ experience in executive and leadership roles in higher education in Australia and the United Kingdom (UK) and this aligns well with FNU’s priorities during its next decade of providing learning, teaching and research opportunities,” Ms Price said.

“The incoming Vice-Chancellor boasts a strong national and international profile bringing with her an innovative and entrepreneurial management style that takes a strategic and solutions focused approach resulting in fiscal and reputational gain.”

Between 2016 and 2020, Professor Karstadt was Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International and Advancement) at Murdoch University in Western Australia. Through this role she gained the requisite

skills and experience relating to research, governance, budget control, and change management. She also established new collaborations and business opportunities and facilitated institutional expansion in Dubai and Myanmar in partnership with third party providers. More recently she has focused on organisational facilitation and the preparation and support of both executive leaders and mid-career professionals in Healthcare and Higher Education.

From 2013 to 2016, she was Executive Dean Health, Engineering, and Sciences at the University of Southern Queensland, where she was responsible for initiating a number of innovative new programmes for the home and overseas markets. Mentoring and coaching her senior executive, she facilitated growth in the number of domestic and international students undertaking higher degrees, including both PhDs and professional doctorates. She also managed the process of university and professional accreditation and established and strengthened collaborations and engagement with industry and other external stakeholders.

In the 12 years preceding her Executive Deanship, Professor Karstadt was at the University of Hertfordshire in the UK, where she progressed from Head of Department to Head of School, to Deputy Dean and then to Associate Director. Throughout, she

strived for a nurturing culture, and clarity of direction to maximise productivity and the achievement of strategic objectives.

Professor Karstadt holds a Professional Doctorate in Education from the University of Hertfordshire, a Masters degree in Education and a Bachelors degree in Mathematics from The Open University (UK), and has experience as a Registered Nurse and a licensed teacher.



Tessa Price
Chancellor and Chair of Council



FNU Outreach Team members Torella Dominiko (left) and Rusila Uluilakeba shares the FNU 2022/2023 Prospectus with a community member.

In a competitive job market, having the right education, training and soft skills are important and more than often are the desirable factors that employers seek when recruiting candidates.

With more than 200 study programmes available for prospective students to choose from, the Fiji National University (FNU) has embarked on school and community visits to create greater awareness of the opportunities available to them.

The quality education and learning support services offered at FNU will open new opportunities for students and enable them to pursue their career goals.

FNU Acting Vice-Chancellor, Dr William May said these outreach activities undertaken by the University's academic and support staff would make it easier for prospective students, teachers, parents and guardians to make informed decisions regarding tertiary studies.

"As the national tertiary institution, we have continued to provide technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and Higher Education programmes to our local, regional and international students," Dr May said.

"These programmes have been designed in consultation with our industry partners to address the skills needed in the workforce. Students have multiple entry pathways into our courses as they range from Level 3-6 (Certificate 3-4, Diploma), undergraduate and postgraduate, Masters and PhD levels of qualification."

"FNU also has various support services for student learning enhancement and flexible fee payment options to ease the financial obligations on our students and families."

The Outreach teams will visit high schools in the Central, Western and Northern Divisions over the next two weeks and will highlight the courses and services available at FNU as well as the application and entry requirements and the Fijian Government's education initiatives offered through the Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLs).

FNU UNDERTAKES NATIONWIDE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

TESTIMONIALS FROM SCHOOL OUTREACH

"The FNU school visit provided an opportunity to interact with FNU staff members and get their questions answered. The information provided is up-to-date, current, and relevant in career choices."

"The FNU visit to our school was very informative, and we are very appreciative of them coming and guiding our students towards their future aspirations. We thank you wholeheartedly for coming to us with all the necessary information needed."

"We would like to thank the Fiji National University staff for speaking with students at Jai Narayan College about the various programmes and studies available at FNU. The explanation was factual, clear and reliable.



Satish Prasad
Careers Teacher
Nadi Muslim College



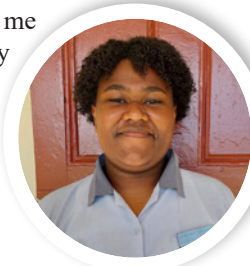
Kiriti Mala
Careers Teacher
Ba Sangam College



Ana Tuibuca
Student
Jai Narayan College

"It was good and made me feel better about furthering my studies at FNU".

Losana Daunitutu
Student
Ba Methodist High School



"The students were satisfied with the presentations as it was very informative."

Meli Mara
Careers Teacher
Mulomulo Secondary School



FNU OUTREACH TEAM CONNECTS WITH YOUTH

The Fiji National University (FNU) participated in the International Youth Day Celebrations by promoting educational opportunities available to all youth across the country.

More than 300 youth from church groups, secondary schools, agricultural backgrounds, and ministry-led youth groups were part of the national celebration.

These leaders of tomorrow managed to get first-hand information from the FNU outreach team regarding programmes, entry requirements, the application process, and also TVET programmes and TSLs support.

FNU's Director Marketing and Communications Karen Lobendahn highlighted the need to continuously engage with the youth of today to ensure they are aware of the study opportunities available to them.

"There are 4600 places available for FNU TVET programmes for students who have completed Year 12

or will be completing Year 12 this year. Graduates from Vocational Centres are also eligible to apply."

"We have had students who enrolled in a certificate programme and took advantage of pathways available and have successfully completed PhD qualifications from overseas universities."

Some youth have also graduated from programmes that helped them with their entrepreneurial aspirations.

"We have seen a huge number of youth from agricultural communities, securing land from their communities and using knowledge and skills from their programme of study to start their commercial agriculture business.

The FNU Outreach team will also be visiting youth groups, communities, and organisations. If you are interested in the FNU team coming to visit for academic counselling and to learn about TVET scholarship for students, please email the FNU Outreach team at outreach@fnu.ac.fj or call us on landline 339 4000 Ext 2896.



Rusila Uluilakeba (left) assisting a youth on the programmes offered by FNU.





Sereana Disoba (middle) with her daughters Miriama (right) and Setaita (left).

GONEWAI FAMILY FOCUSES ON EDUCATION

When you have the support of your loved ones walking alongside you, it makes learning more enjoyable, exciting, and meaningful. These were the words of Sereana Disoba, who together with her two daughters are pursuing studies at the Fiji National University (FNU) with the goal of securing better employment opportunities after graduation.

Sereana, 42 completed the Basic Operations in a Call Center (Level 3) course, while her daughter Setaita is pursuing a certificate in the Enrolled Nursing programme, and Mirriama is studying the Bachelor of Education degree programme at FNU.

“We are pleased that we are receiving our education from the Fiji National University,” she stated proudly.

“While I have completed my course satisfactorily, I am confident that both my children will achieve their goals as well. We all have career ambitions and decided to enrol at FNU to gain a tertiary qualification.

“I could not attend the University earlier due to the nature of work my husband was involved in where he

was being transferred from one place to another. After he went to New Zealand, I could pursue my studies.”

Sereana said she is happy to have completed the Basic Operations in a Call Center (Level 3) course which was specifically designed by FNU in close consultation with the BPO Council.

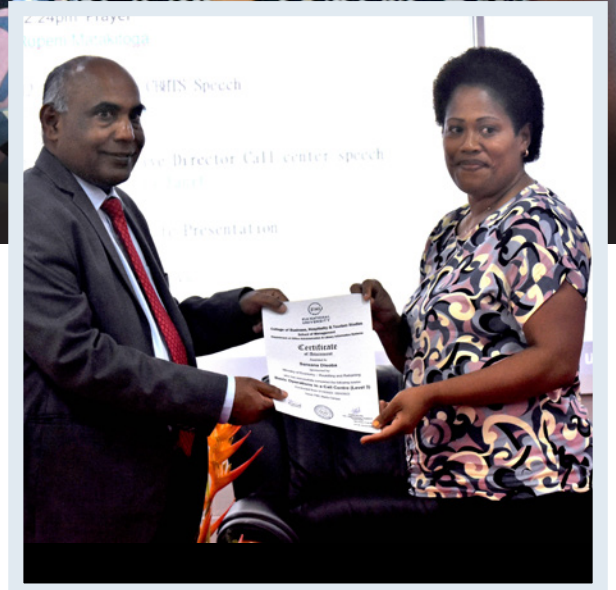
“But I did not give up on my dream, and I’m so blessed that my husband, currently working in New Zealand, is able to support us achieve our academic aspirations.”

Mirri, who is 21 and pursuing her Bachelor of Education offered by the College of Humanities and Education (CHE), said FNU had opened the doors for her family to gain quality education and chase their dreams.

“Our parents are our strength, and with their support, we are able to excel in our lives,” she explained.

“In our family, we always encourage one another to ensure that we all achieve our goals together and make each other proud with our accomplishments.”

Setaita, 20, who is presently enrolled in a nursing course, expressed gratitude to the university for



providing opportunities for students to learn and follow their dreams.

“FNU has courses for everyone and allows young and old to explore chances for a better future. I am looking forward to a successful career with Seta, who is going to be a nurse soon.”

“My message to young people is to explore prospects with FNU if they wish to have a good career and acquire a solid job.”

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.

MOMAIZA LANDS A JOB AFTER COMPLETING COURSE AT FNU

There is no substitute for hard work. These are the words of Momaiza Yusuf who managed to secure employment soon after completing the Fiji National University’s Basic Operations in a Call Centre (Level 3) course.

Yusuf, originally from Lautoka, enrolled in the course to enhance her skills and learn the new techniques that would assist in her career advancement.

“I am thankful to the course coordinators and Fiji National University for introducing such programmes for students to undertake and learn new skills and enhance their knowledge,” she said.

“I learnt a lot and I intend to use all my knowledge and training in my work and grow further.”

After completing the course, Yusuf applied for several positions and was able to find employment as an Office Administrator at Vision Investment, trading as Mahogany Industries (Fiji) Limited in Suva.

“I have previously worked at the Nadi

Muslim Primary School and at Nasinu Muslim College as a receptionist and a typist,” she said.

“As soon as I completed the course, I managed to get a job at Mahogany Industries (Fiji) Limited, where apart from the office administration role, I also carry out phone operators’ duties dealing with the external clients.”

While addressing the graduates, FNU’s Dean of the College of Business Hospitality and Tourism Studies, Professor Arun Elias, said the course was growing in demand and provided the right path to secure employment.

“We are extremely proud to have produced graduates from the course as the majority of them have secured jobs in reputable outsourcing companies in the country,” Professor Elias said.

“The course provides immediate employment for graduates. As a result of this course, the standard of customer service and call centre training provided for people in Fiji will be improved.”



Momaiza Yusuf (right) receiving her certificate from the Chief Guest, Outsource Fiji Executive Director, Sagufta Janif.



FNU staff with Fijian Election Office Supervisor of Elections Mohammed Saneem (third from left), UNDP Team Leader for Effective Governance, Revai Makanje Aalbaek and the British High Commissioner to Fiji Dr Brian Jones, at the launch.

FNU LAUNCHES YOUTH VOTER AND ELECTION EDUCATION PROJECT

A Youth Voter and Election Education Project was launched at the Fiji National University (FNU), which aims to create greater awareness and educate young voters on their civic duty.

The project is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in collaboration with the Fijian Elections Office (FEO), with funding from Australia and New Zealand.

Students at FNU who are 18 years old or older will be able to participate in the training provided by FNU academics.

The UNDP Team Leader for Effective Governance, Revai Makanje Aalbaek, launched the project with the Fijian Elections Office Supervisor of Elections, Mohammed Saneem.

Aalbaek said she was happy to work with FNU and FEO to spread the word about how important it is to vote.

“I am delighted to be here on behalf of UNDP to launch the project. The topic is very close to my heart, and for this fact, I am pleased that we got into the partnership with FNU and Fijian Elections Office; ensuring greater citizen participation to guarantee more

inclusive electoral processes around the globe is one of the UNDP’s key aspirations,” she said.

“This project targeting the youth emphasises the importance of democratic processes in the establishment of a sustainable, just, inclusive and peaceful societies as reflected in SDG 16,” she added.

Goal 16 is Peace, Justice and Strong institutions.

The Project lead Dr Mosmi Bhim said the activities under this project include voter and elections education workshops in the Central, Northern, and Western campuses of FNU, an FNU-wide essay competition, and speed debate at the Nasinu campus, and drama/short skits on elections at the Nasinu campus.

“Election is coming near, and this is a good time for us to educate and raise awareness on voting for the young people,” Dr Bhim said.

“It is important that the youth have their say in selecting the Government which they want them to represent in the parliament,” Dr Bhim said.

FNU’s College of Humanities and Education Associate Dean Dr Sakul Kundra said that while elections play a critical role in a democracy, electoral education is vital to ensure a greater understanding of the process and to accept the outcomes.



“FNU faculty with expertise in elections and governance has taken the lead in conducting these workshops around different FNU campuses across Fiji to educate the youth about their voting processes and implications. These workshops will be a noteworthy contribution toward empowering the youth and all registered voters to educate themselves about voting methods,” Dr Kundra said.

“Elections are arguably the most important event in the democratic life of a nation, and all elements of society must be fully engaged in this democratic process. Many of our young people will be voting for the first time in the 2022 National Elections, and it is vital to facilitate the opportunities and platforms to encourage youth participation in the electoral process. Young people have a lot of ideas and aspirations that can contribute to nation-building.”

FNU will host workshops with the students on the different FNU Campuses and also host a public discussion on September 8 at the Nasinu Campus.

FNU COLLABORATES WITH INDUSTRY PARTNERS



The Fiji National University (FNU) continuously strives to provide a conducive and enriching learning experience to ensure that all students receive quality education and practical training throughout their studies.

This is embedded in FNU’s Strategic Plan 2021-2026, with key pillars highlighting priority areas of student experience, education for employability and research with real-world impact.

The institution has established close working relationships with industry partners as part of FNU’s commitment in these areas.

Recently, FNU’s College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST) formed a partnership with iMGINE Engineering & Technologies PTE Limited through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The deal will provide FNU students with the opportunity to work on projects as well as undertake joint research.

“We are excited for this venture as our students will be able to collaborate with iMGINE on projects that includes health, finance, automation of transportation systems, maritime automation systems, tsunami alert

system and automatic flood monitoring systems,” CEST Dean, Professor Tibor Pasinszki (pictured left) said.

“This collaboration may result in several joint activities, such as research, publication, proposals, and human and technical capacity building.”

“Our College had also developed our own strategic plan, with emphasis on our commitment to becoming the leading dual-sector STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) college in the Pacific.”

“Our mission is to serve the people, the economy and society of Fiji and the wider Pacific region, by providing education and training for employability, with an excellent student experience; carrying out research with real-world impact, aligned to national priorities and with global relevance; engaging proactively with stakeholders, in our communities, nation and region; and demonstrating leadership in sustainability.”

“Our aim is to build strong ties with our industry stakeholders for the greater benefit of our students, industrial partners and our society. Hence, our engagement with iMGINE is an important milestone in realising the College’s strategic plan.”





Students of University of Lincoln with the Think Pacific briefing officials and FNU staff members.

FNU PARTNERS WITH THINK PACIFIC TO PROMOTE INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

A group of 21 international university students from the United Kingdom who are part of the Think Pacific’s Higher Education Mobility for the Turing Scheme met with staff and research students from the Fiji National University (FNU) where they engaged in discussions and shared their experiences about their visit.

FNU and the UK-based NGO Think Pacific signed a Memorandum of Understanding in May last year to support internships, mobility programmes and support collaborative activities. The partnership allows international university students to visit FNU campuses and to meet and engage with FNU students. The international university students also engage in discussions with FNU’s academics and research students and complete reflection summaries based on challenges posed by the FNU academics.

Think Pacific’s programme aims to broaden the United Kingdom students’ cultural understanding,

soft skills, and employability and foster a long-term understanding of key globalisation, sustainability, and civic responsibility issues. Students engaged in the questions and answers sessions on the themes of building resilient communities through health, education and Fiji, the South Pacific and Climate Change. The FNU staff who delivered in the session were Dr Odille Chang, Dr Gade Waqa, Dr Ravita Prasad, Dr Shipra Shah and Niranjwan Chettiar.

The programme challenges students to learn about global citizenship while providing truly unique study abroad and work experience that models the Turing Scheme’s core objectives and provides a unique offering to universities in order to align with the UK Government’s new foreign policy focus on the Asia Pacific region.

The FNU team also officiated in a reflection session with students from the University of Lincoln who shared their experiences and journey on staying in and exploring the village life.



FNU’s Pro Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching Professor Lisa Harrison said the presentations reflected a deep appreciation of the local culture and traditions.

“It is a fantastic learning initiative which encourages students to be immersed in local education systems and to experience local cultures and customs firsthand,” she said.

“During the reflection sessions, the students shared many interesting stories. It is always interesting to hear how their lived experience reflected their initial expectations, regardless of what they were told before the project.

“We cannot teach them everything because they must experience things for themselves, and this study trip was overwhelmingly a transformative experience.”

“As a university, we would like our local students to travel to the UK though this is cost prohibitive for many.”

OVERSEAS STUDENTS RELISH THEIR EXCURSION TO FIJI

Jake Whitby, Think Pacific Briefing Leader, thanked the Fijian communities for allowing the organisation and the students to work and learn from them.

“The students had a good time and experienced a culture with, perhaps, less physical material things than they are used to in their lives back home,” said Whitby.

“The values and the Fijian culture and custom of sharing and caring and looking after one another have had a huge impact on the volunteers, like the projects have done in the past, and will continue to do so in the future. They have built friendships and relationships with them through the project which the village and the volunteers will carry forward with them.”

“The young students learned valuable lessons that will have an impact back home. When they would see their neighbours, they may not know them, and the people might be in need, so now they might go and check on them. The caring nature of the Fijian people can be taken for granted while here but it is not necessarily the same in England or the Western world with people more closed off to the wider community. They also discussed and experienced the importance of faith and religion and its motivation for others,” Whitby added.

Zainab Saim, a 19-year-old International Relations student, said she enjoyed her time with the villagers.

“It was one of the best experiences of my life, and I will never forget how much I learned and how much more I was able to deliver than I had anticipated,” she said.

“I learned about the culture and history of Fiji, and I also experienced that people in Fiji think differently from the people from the UK. We do things differently

back at home, and in Fiji, people do it differently. I promise to return and experience village life once more.”

Another student, 23-year-old Emmanuel Hagan, stated that he was amazed to see the beauty of Fiji, which he did not expect from the other side of the world.

“We loved making lovo (refers to the underground oven that is used to cook food) and its processes, and

each of us had a role in carrying it out. I hope we can make the lovo at home,” he said.

“Our four weeks in Fiji changed us a lot, and we had different experiences, and with each day that passed, we would spend time with a family, and by the end of the journey, we had made a family here.”

“When we left the village, everyone cried, and this demonstrated the bond we had formed.”



Think Pacific Briefing Leader, Jake Whitby (right) talking to the participants at the reflection session at Beachcomber Island.



PAONGO ENJOYS THE INCLUSIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY AT FNU

As a young girl, Tongan national Makeleta Paongo could vividly recall admiring the happy expressions and smiles of her family and community members. This developed in her the desire to ‘keep those smiles forever’ as she grew older and contemplated a study and career pathway that would enable her to achieve this.

It was in high school when Paongo (*pictured below*) learnt about the programmes available at the Fiji National University (FNU) and decided she would undertake the Bachelor of Oral Health programme offered at the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS).

“FNU had the best medical school in the region that I knew of so I made sure I submitted my applications within the deadlines provided,” Paongo shared with a smile. I was thankful to learn that I was accepted into my programme of choice at the University as this was the first step towards achieving my dreams in the dental field. As a first-year student, it has been an eye-opener being at FNU and studying with students from different backgrounds. I made sure to participate in all the classroom, clinics and other activities as this added to my learning experience at FNU.”

The 19-year-old said that the support services and campus life functions at the College ensured that although students would miss their families back at home, they were still enjoying their student life.

“One of the memorable moments for me so far was the flag raising ceremony that was held at our Pasifika Campus earlier this year,” Paongo said.

“It was a moment of pride for me to see the Tongan flag being raised and seeing the display of diversity and inclusion by the University.”

“The walkway at the flagpole area has now become one of my favourite places to be at and watch students go about their lives and work towards their academic and personal goals.”



SEAFARING IN KUBOUNIVANUA'S BLOOD

Being a seaman isn't for the faint-hearted. The work is demanding and sometimes can be dangerous due to the sudden change in the weather. However, the job is rewarding as you get to travel and earn a decent living.

These were the words of seasoned seaman Dranivesi Lutuyawa Williame Cati Kubounivanua, who recently graduated from Fiji National University's (FNU) Fiji Maritime Academy (FMA) in Deckhand Fishing and is excited about advancing his career now with formal training.

The 30-year-old from Nukuloa, Gau, Lomaiviti said the family's support has been crucial in his career.

“I have been in the fishing industry for the past five years as the second engineer, and later on, I decided to take this course as it is more in demand and it is more interesting,” Kubounivanua (*pictured above*) said.

“My father was a class four captain, and after he passed away, I decided to change my mind, and I wanted to walk in my father's footsteps. I grew up seeing him work in the sea, and he has told many

interesting stories relating to his trips out to sea, and my interest grew further.

“Graduating from this course is a clearance for me to either complete my Able Seaman or continue to be a Class 5 Master and will in turn further my career into a Class 3 Master/Watch keeper.”

Kubounivanua said one needs to be mentally and physically prepared to take up the role of a seafarer.

“I have been out in the sea for months, leaving my family behind. It is very difficult for me, but I have done it as I have chosen this field, and it was always my passion to work out in the sea. Sometimes it is hard, and I have to keep going, but if I stop, then I would be required to go home,” he mentioned.

“If you are mentally prepared, you can survive in the seas as you won't see the land for months, or probably for a year. It also requires much physical effort to carry out your tasks while you are on board.”

28 students recently graduated from Fiji National University's Maritime Academy (FMA) Deck Hand Fishing Programme.



GUIVALU SAILS WITH A QUALIFICATION

Josateki Guivalu has spent the last 35 years traveling to the sea to work on fishing vessels to earn a living for his family.

The 49-year-old has faced a lot of challenges and difficulties, which forced him to take up a job on a fishing vessel so he could support his family's needs from a young age.

Guivalu (*pictured right*) has experience in different areas of work at sea but lacked a formal qualification. He was determined to get a qualification which he could not achieve during his young days.

Recently, he was one of the oldest Deckhand Fishing Mini Graduation graduates from Fiji National University's (FNU) Fiji Maritime Academy (FMA).

“I've been going to the sea for over three decades because I started working on fishing boats when I couldn't pay my school fees and was refused entry one day because I didn't have any money to pay. I was warned that I wouldn't be permitted to enter the school unless I paid my fees,” he explained.

“I didn't have any money, so I resolved to make a livelihood by working everywhere I could, and I was offered a job working at sea. Because I spend most of my time at sea working on boats, the sea has provided for my family financially.”

Guivalu, a resident of Kalekana in Lami, said he has battled storms and bad weather while out on the water.

“My family has been my support since they always pray for me and my co-worker's safety whenever I go out to sea. When you're out at sea, anything can happen which includes meeting with the bad weather, storms, and additional perils like a mechanical issue with the engine,” he said.

“However, thanks to God's protection, I haven't had any serious problems while out at sea,” he remarked.

“I am pleased that I completed the course and that the certificate will help me advance in my work. I have all of the knowledge about the tasks involved out at sea and how to live, but I did not have a qualification, so my demand would grow now that I have the knowledge and qualification. The sea is a different world out there because you always have to be on high alert and watch after yourself.

“My message to the people is to protect marine life; I've seen the wonderful work out there, and now whenever I go out, I observe the harmful impacts of oil spillage and chemicals that are discarded, which affect marine species,” he said.

Guivalu is determined to further his education with the class five education.





SCAN TO REGISTER

Talanoa with our Alumni



FNU HELPS KUMAR REACH HER FULL POTENTIAL

Offered under the College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies (CBHTS), the three-year programme was designed to prepare graduates with conceptual understanding and practical skills in the operation of commercial activities. Fields of study include economics, commercial law, quantitative analysis and management, with a particular focus on accounting as a tool of financial management and external disclosure of business performance, viability and accountability.

“I cherished my time at FNU because I learnt to grow emotionally, physically, philosophically and socially,” Kumar shared.

“They say ‘Money makes the world go round’, hence there would always be a need for people to manage that money. This was why I decided to undertake this programme with an aim to be a successful accountant.”

“I chose FNU because I knew the University would help me reach my full potential and be workforce ready to meet the job market demands. It was a challenge working part-time whilst studying and coping with the loss of my father during my first year of university studies.”

“Despite this, I am grateful for the support I had that enabled me to complete the degree with excellent scores.”

Three years after receiving her undergraduate certificate in 2015, Kumar decided to upskill her qualifications and enrolled in the Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting programme.

Navigating her way through studies interrupted and influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated restrictions on learning and teaching, Kumar managed to persevere and graduated in 2020.

She is currently pursuing her Master of Commerce in Accounting at FNU.

“I want to highlight that in addition to the theoretical and practical knowledge I gained, FNU also embedded in me the importance of soft skills such as teamwork, communication and constant and comprehensive learning.”

Career

During her degree studies, Kumar also worked as an Assistant Accountant at Vimals Investment Fiji Ltd before taking on a similar role at the Foundation of Rural Integrated Enterprises & Development (FRIEND) Fiji.

In 2017, Kumar became a Team Leader Accounts Payable at Higgins Fiji and lead a team of six in overseeing the operations of the department and its effective work assignments

with staff and vendors.

“In the five years I’ve been at Higgins, I have managed over 100 vendor accounts, successfully completed numerous special projects, created new and streamlined existing procedures and reviewed and analysed monthly journal entries and various accounts,” she explained.

Kumar has progressed in her career and her most recent role was Manager Finance at the Sigatoka Town Council.

“As Manager, I am responsible for planning and executing the financial tasks and projects of the organisation, making estimates of funds required for short and long-term financial objectives of the Council, achieving a proper mix of equity and debt, managing metrics, KPI tracking and reports and supervise the preparation of quarterly and annual account.”

She is now the Chief Financial Controller at Mal Gov in Marshall Island.

Words of Wisdom

Kumar said the main advice that she banked on throughout her career progression was to keep her goal in mind.

“Sometimes we get so distracted by immediate barriers that we feel like giving up easily, but if we always have a clear idea of what we want to achieve then this serves as a source of motivation,” she said.

“Remember also that every moment is an opportunity to learn from everyone around you, no matter their title. Pay attention when things go well, and pay extra attention when they don’t, and watch how people react to it.”

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.

R yana Rashmita Kumar believes that an enriching student experience during one’s tertiary studies is an important ingredient to achieving a successful career.

Without missing a beat, Kumar said her tertiary journey at the Fiji National University (FNU) cemented the notion that a balance between receiving a quality education and being engaged in campus life activities contributed to a memorable phase in her life.

From the Sugar City of Lautoka, Kumar’s knack for finances influenced her career ambitions after completing studies at Lautoka Primary School and Pandit Vishnu Deo Memorial College.

Education

In 2012, Kumar enrolled in the Bachelor of Accounting at FNU’s Namaka Campus in Nadi.

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.

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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

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