



Crafting Dreams

THROUGH EDUCATION

SHARMA PLANS HIS FUTURE WITH FNU

FNU OPEN DAY PERFECT FOR YOUNG FIJIANS

SCAN
FOR ECOPY





Fiji National University Acting Vice-Chancellor Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba with the student volunteers at the FNU Open Day at Nasinu Campus.

Nurturing aspirations through the power of education

It is an honour to write a message for the October edition of the FNUNIKUA. The highlight for the University was our annual Open Day event, where we had the privilege of hosting high school students, teachers, families and visitors at the Nasinu, Naduna, Namaka and Natabua campuses for the 2023 Open Day.

This event held great promise and excitement under the inspiring theme, “Dreams to Reality” as we celebrated aspirations and the journey that awaited every one of us as we strive to turn our dreams into real and meaningful accomplishments.

I sincerely thank all our staff, student volunteers, the FNU Council and the leadership team for contributing to a successful Open Day event. Their wisdom and experience inspired all of us, especially aspiring students, as we embarked on this enlightening journey of learning and growth.

We also extended a warm and sincere welcome to the prospective students who were present on that day. You stood at the threshold of a transformative chapter in your lives, a chapter that held the promise of shaping your dreams into reality. The Fiji National University is committed to nurturing and guiding you in this transformative journey, empowering you to achieve your goals and fulfil your aspirations.

The Open Day was an invaluable opportunity to explore the vast array of academic programmes, discover the rich tapestry of experiences that awaited you, and gain insight into the vibrant FNU community. You found dedicated faculty members, state-of-the-art facilities, and a nurturing environment that fostered learning, creativity, and holistic development.

As the Acting Vice-Chancellor of this esteemed institution, I assure you that we are committed to providing you with the best education, innovative research opportunities, and a supportive network enabling you to chase and surpass your dreams.

We hope you seized the moment, asked questions, explored your interests, and envisioned the path that aligned with your dreams.

FNU partnerships

To enhance our student experience and training delivery, Fiji National University (FNU) has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the College of Southern Nevada in the United States, aimed at enhancing the educational experience for students at both institutions.

This MoU encompasses various forms of collaboration, including exchanges of students, academic personnel, and administrative staff. These exchanges not only foster cultural diversity but also add depth to the student journey.

The MoU also covers the facilitation and sharing of knowledge through the exchange of publications, reports, and academic materials, ensuring that both parties benefit from a wealth of shared information.

Fiji National University also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Fiji Traders. Students and Staff will receive discounts on the products sold by Fiji Traders. The company will also offer internship and attachment opportunities for students.

Fiji Maritime Academy Networking Event

Fiji National University’s Fiji Maritime Academy hosted the networking event with the staff members of Fiji Maritime Academy, stakeholders, alumni and members of the community. We are pleased to support

our global family of alumni and, in turn, to reach out to you for your support in making FNU even stronger in the years ahead. There are many ways in which you can support your university, such as mentoring current students, giving guest lectures and seminars, or hiring our graduates as interns or employees. Given the current challenges, we especially value any financial support our friends and well-wishers might be in a position to provide.

The establishment of Alumni committees within each college aims to ensure that all colleges can organise activities aligned with their respective programmes. I take pride in sharing that the Fiji Maritime Academy (FMA) has already initiated its fundraising efforts. We eagerly anticipate more fundraising activities and are especially excited about the upcoming end-of-year ball that FMA is planning. Stay tuned for ticket sales, and we invite you to be a part of this alumni celebration, rejoicing in our collective alumni achievements.

Higher Education Careers Expo

Fiji National University assisted students and members of the public at the 2023 Higher Education Careers Expo at the Vodafone Arena earlier this month.

At FNU, we understand that higher education is a pivotal step in one’s life, and the choices you make now can profoundly shape your future.

The Higher Education Expo was not just about showcasing our programmes; it was also an opportunity for students and people to learn about the vibrant campus life, our state-of-the-art facilities, and the supportive community that awaits you at FNU. We believe that a well-rounded education encompasses classroom learning, personal growth, leadership development, and extracurricular activities.

Whether you’re a recent high school graduate, a working professional looking to upskill, or someone in search of a career change, FNU has something to offer you. We encourage you to explore the opportunities available, ask questions, and engage in informative discussions with our representatives. Our team is here to assist you in mapping out your academic and professional journey step by step.

Semester 1, 2024 Applications

We are excited to announce that the applications for Semester 1, 2024, are now open at Fiji National University (FNU). This is your opportunity to take a step towards realising your educational and career goals. Whether you’re a current student looking to continue your academic journey or a prospective student eager to join FNU, our academic staff members are here to guide you through the process.

Our academic staff members are experts in their respective fields and are passionate about helping students succeed. They can provide valuable advice on choosing the right programme or course that aligns with your interests and career aspirations.

We understand that selecting the right programme is a crucial decision, and our staff is here to address your questions and concerns. They can help you explore the different programmes, discuss curriculum details, and assist you in making an informed choice that suits your academic and professional needs.

Vinaka
Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba
 Acting Vice-Chancellor





College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry display booth during the Open Day at the Nasinu Campus.



Honourable Ravu commends CAFF booth at Open Day

Minister for Fisheries and Forestry, Honourable Kalaveti Ravu said the Fiji National University's (FNU) College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's (CAFF) booth at the 2023 Open Day offered many opportunities for the public.

The Honourable Minister (*pictured left*), who visited the College's booth with his wife and two children on the second day of the Open Day at the Nasinu Campus, said the displays motivated him with ideas to pursue upon his retirement.

"The College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's booth at the FNU 2023 Open Day offered many opportunities for both students and the public especially retirees under one booth," Honourable Ravu said.

"It is encouraging, not only for students, but also for the general public, as It opens our minds, and I really appreciate FNU's attempt in providing an engaging display.

"If you missed the opportunity to come and have a look at the displays at FNU's Open Day, do come in next year!"

FNU's CAFF booth won the Office of the Vice-Chancellor's Open Day Award Trophy for the second year in a row, while the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS) won the runner-up trophy.

The FNU 2023 Open Day was held across the country at our Naduna, Namaka, Natabua, and Nasinu campuses, with thousands of students and members of the public attending the event from 5-7 October 2023.



Nasinu Campus Open Day.



Namaka Campus Open Day.



Natabua Campus Open Day.



FNUNIKUA



Care | Honesty | Accountability | Service | Excellence
www.fnu.ac.fj



Yavalanavanua

aims to amplify voices of the indigenous community

In a remarkable triumph that transcends borders, an academic and proud daughter of Taveuni, Adi Tagimoucia Tupou Moeofu Yavalanavanua, has been awarded a prestigious scholarship.

The scholarship, affiliated with the University of Newcastle, is geared towards a study of exceptional importance. It focuses on understanding the perceptions of undergraduate university students concerning the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Hailing from the chiefly household of Qaraisoki, Mataqali Valelevu of Somosomo, Taveuni, and Yavalanavanua, Adi Tagimoucia was formerly employed as a Senior Lecturer at the Fiji National University's (FNU), College of Business, Hospitality, and Tourism Studies (CBHTS).

Yavalanavanua (*pictured above*) recognises that this scholarship is not just a personal victory but an opportunity to amplify indigenous communities' voices and underscore education's critical role in sustainable development.

"It marks a vital step towards integrating SDG education into undergraduate university courses, ensuring that the leaders of tomorrow are well-versed in the global challenges of sustainability," she said.

"This study stretches across selected countries in the Asia-Pacific region, with a view to enriching our comprehension of how future leaders across various industries perceive the SDGs."

"I am thankful to the College of Business, Hospitality, and Tourism Studies' Acting Dean, Dr Aseli Tuibeqa, who has been my mentor along my research journey."

In the context of this scholarship, the scholar shares her heartfelt memories of growing up on the island of Taveuni.

The former FNU lecturer reminisces about the Somosomo River, a lifeline for her village, once pure and pristine, flowing from the Uluiqalau mountain, offering both solace and sustenance.

However, her journey also reflects the stark reality of climate change and unsustainable land use practices that have taken a toll on her cherished homeland.

"The island of Taveuni is home to a number of endemic species; it has the largest forest reserves in Fiji, with its fertile soils and high rainfall. However, according to a South Pacific Regional Environment Project 2020 report, climate change has been a stressor to unsustainable land use practices, as well as unsustainable small-scale and commercial fishing on Taveuni, as it degrades marine, agricultural and land resources," Yavalanavanua added.

Attached to a groundbreaking study, this scholarship not only celebrates her achievements but also shines a spotlight on the vital issue of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the Asia-Pacific region.

"As an indigenous woman and academic, I champion the cause of SDGs and sustainable development."

She also emphasised that the perceptions and attitudes of Fijian students are pivotal in shaping sustainable development strategies.

"This scholarship is not just an accolade but a pivotal milestone in preserving cultural heritage, environmental stewardship, and building a sustainable future. It calls attention to the complex interplay of heritage and contemporary global issues, inspiring us all to take an active role in safeguarding the traditions, culture, and land that have sustained indigenous communities for generations."

"The FNU Open Day is an event not to be missed, especially for young ones like my niece and children, as it helps them get a tangible experience of their dreams."

These were the words from Nadara resident Vanessa Heilala, who visited the 2023 FNU Open Day with her niece and two sons at the FNU Nasinu Campus.

"Events such as the FNU Open Day help young ones visualise their dreams," said Heilala.

Heilala's family was one of the hundreds of families that visited the 2023 FNU Open Day to take advantage of the festive atmosphere and the various food stalls selling various types of food and snacks.

"I am so glad my young ones get to experience the fun and learn about how they can achieve their dreams. I think as parents, we look forward to how we can help our children realise their potential and dreams, and the

FNU Open Day Perfect for Young Fijians

FNU Open Day is extremely helpful with that."

She added that the friendly students and staff made her family feel welcomed and were happy to assist with the questions they had in mind.

"Everyone here is so friendly and eager to help; it makes us feel comfortable and so happy that we decided to spend Saturday at the FNU Open Day."

"It will surely be a memory they won't forget, especially because of the many unique and amazing displays," added Heilala.

Heilala said that her young ones were so excited to participate in the day's activities, and they enjoyed visiting all the booths.

The Fiji National University 2023 Open Day was held



across the country at our Naduna, Namaka, Natabua, and Nasinu campuses, from October 5-7.



Nasinu Campus Open Day.



Namaka Campus Open Day.



Natabua Campus Open Day.



FNU is the place where dreams truly become reality – Gloria Lewatoro

Lewatoro (second from left) with her Collegues at the FNU Open Day.

Year 12 Saint Joseph's Secondary School student, Gloria Lewatoro was overjoyed to find out that students can join the Fiji National University after completing Year 11.

"I think it is what most students dream of. Being able to turn their dreams into reality as soon as possible, and I am so glad that FNU offers that opportunity," said Lewatoro.

The young lass was accompanied by a group of friends from her school as well as the Assemblies of God High School teachers and students.

"We made plans to ensure we were able to attend the Saturday event at the Nasinu Campus to see what FNU has to offer for our future."

"My friends and I were not disappointed at all. Apart from finding out which courses we will pursue

in the future, we had an amazing experience with the activities. Our favourite was the College of Engineering, Science and Technology's car ride."

Assemblies of God High School student, Aca Naborisi added that he could not wait to pursue his Certificate in Ageing and Community Support Care (Leve 4) at the College of Humanities and Education (CHE) next year.

"I believe FNU is the best choice anyone can make for higher education," stated Naborisi.

"The hands-on experience through mandatory practical and industry attachments ensure that FNU graduates are work-ready, and that is something I am aiming for."

Naborisi, Lewatoro, and their friends are planning to join Fiji National University in Semester 1, 2024.

Determined to pursue his educational dreams, Ratu Sailosi Katololo, a student from the Gospel School for the Deaf, was amazed by the services offered Fiji National University's (FNU) Disability Centre during the 2023 Open Day.

"I was genuinely excited to see the displays at the different booths. I would like to inform other special students that FNU has a Disability Centre that contributes immensely to our learning."

The 18-year-old (*pictured right*) believes that one should have passion and commitment to realise one's dreams.

The Nadroga lad is confident about joining FNU in the future to enrol in the carpentry programme at FNU's College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST).

"I reside at the school hostel to complete my education, and I am working hard to ensure my success in my career," he said.

"This is the first time for me to visit FNU during the Open Day, see the campus, and learn more about the programmes and courses. I am thankful to the Fiji National University for allowing us to come and explore the Open Day."

Katololo grateful for FNU's Disability Centre

Gospel School for the Deaf teacher Christine Tawake, an FNU alumna who completed her Bachelor of Education (Primary) in 2014, said the students were well-informed about the courses and programmes.

"It is a proud moment for me to be a part of the Open Day since I was once an FNU student. After so many years, I am coming to the Open Day with the students and assisting them in making informed decisions," she said.

"The Open Day is a crucial part of the lives of secondary school students as it prepares them for tertiary studies."



Sharma plans his future with FNU

Engineering and technology are the languages of innovation spoken by those who dare to dream and create.

At the 2023 Fiji National University (FNU) Open Day, Sharvesh Sharma (*pictured left*), like many others, embarked on an exhilarating journey through the displays arranged by the College of Engineering, Science, and Technology (CEST).

With enthusiasm in his eyes, Sharma expressed his excitement regarding the Open Day.

"FNU's Open Day was a game-changer for me. The FNU team was super dedicated, and they answered all our questions. It was an amazing visit, and I can't wait to join the College of Engineering, Science, and Technology at FNU next year," he said.

"I am interested in studying the Civil Engineering programme at FNU's CEST."

Like many young minds, the 18-year-old Year 13 student at Rishikul Sanatan College, arrived at the

event with a fervent yearning to turn his dream into a reality.

"My parents have been very supportive in helping me turn my dreams into reality as they are the pillars of support and inspiration in my life," he said.

"Education is a powerful tool in today's world. It can be used to change the world, invent new technology, help in the fight against climate change, and assist other people in their growth. It is the foundation upon which we build our lives and the bridge to a brighter, more meaningful existence, where we see our dreams turn into reality."

Armed with unwavering determination and a clear vision for his future, Sharma left the Open Day confident that FNU was his ideal springboard to prepare him for a career in the engineering field.

Students who are interested in establishing a career path in engineering, sciences and technology can view the programmes offered by the College of Engineering, Sciences and Technology on the link <https://www.fnu.ac.fj/engineering-science-technology/>.

Interested students can Apply Now for Semester 1, 2024 studies via the FNU website on <https://www.fnu.ac.fj/student/> or email to admission@fnu.ac.fj

For further information or queries, students can also Text (Toll-Free) to 857 for Vodafone and Inkk users.

Alternatively, applicants can visit any of the FNU campuses to submit applications.



FNUNIKUA



Care | Honesty | Accountability | Service | Excellence
www.fnu.ac.fj



Uluivalili College Students.

Students show a lot of interest in FNU programmes

Hospitality and Tourism Studies (CBHTS) had their booths at the Open Day for the students and visitors to explore different programmes and courses.

National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) were also present to provide advice and academic counselling to the students and the public who attended the Open Day.

Head of Labasa Campus, Pardeep Lal said the Open Day attracted a lot of students who were eager to explore the courses and programmes.

“I am extremely happy with the number of students visiting the Naduna Campus over the two days of FNU Open Day. The enquiries they made ensured that they were career focused and they looked forward to the tertiary education. We are also promoting government supported TVET programmes through Tertiary Scholarship and Loans Services (TSLs) in construction, hospitality and tourism and automotive programmes,” Lal said.

“I am also delighted to see the response from the parents and the members of the public who turned up at the Open Day from different areas to come and explore the Open Day atmosphere, and the majority of them came with their children.”

The College of Humanities and Education (CHE) displayed the best and most interactive booth for the visiting guests. It scooped up the Office of the Vice-Chancellor’s Open Day Best Booth Display Award at the Naduna Campus while the College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies were the runner-up.

Fiji National University’s (FNU) Naduna Campus was abuzz with over 2000 students and teachers attending the two-day Open Day from October 5-6.

Chief Guest at the FNU Open Day in Naduna Campus was the Divisional Education Officer North, Iliseva Volai.

Volai, while officiating at the opening ceremony, challenged students to achieve their dreams through education.

“When you invest in higher education, you are investing in new ways of thinking and acquiring problem-solving skills,” she said.

“It connects you to a community, it exposes you to a bigger world and apparently lifts you to another level of maturity and responsibility.”

FNU’s five colleges, College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS), College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF), College of Humanities and Education (CHE), College of Engineering, Sciences and Technology (CEST), College of Business,

FNU’s Fiji Maritime Academy (FMA) and the



Divisional Education Officer North, Iliseva Volai (middle) at the Naduna Campus Open Day.

Natabua High School student Purvi Paida was grateful to be accompanied by her father, Jitesh Narottam Paida, to the 2023 Fiji National University (FNU) Open Day at Natabua Campus on October 6.

Although she was unable to tag along with her friends from her class as all the other students from the various schools did, Purvi had the greatest blessing when her father stepped in and agreed to accompany her to the Natabua Campus.

“I felt really good having my dad accompany me to Natabua Campus,” she said.

The 18-year-old (pictured right) is currently a Year 13 science student at the Lautoka school.

“When I first came, I visited the biology lab, and I got to see many things, such as embryology, fossil records, bacteria culture, and many things under the microscope.”

“The Physics Lab was really cool too, and I

Father - daughter duo attend FNU Open Day

learned about the wave theory and how electrons are distributed.”

Paida said she plans to pursue her tertiary-level education in the medical field.

“FNU is a really good place to study; the environment is conducive to learning, and the staff and students here are really friendly,” she added.



Ellen Karkal believes the Fiji National University (FNU) will help transform her dreams into reality.

The 22-year-old, originally from Papua New Guinea



(PNG), was among the students and the members of the public who were part of FNU’s Open Day this month.

Karkal (pictured left), accompanied by her adopted grandmother, successfully enrolled in the College of Humanities and Education (CHE) Bachelor of Arts (Education) in Counselling programme on the second day of the annual event.

The bright young lady from East Sepik Province was pursuing a Bachelor of Education (Language and Literature) at the University of Goroka in Papua New Guinea. However, her love for Fiji brought her back to the country.

“I am originally from Papua New Guinea but grew up in Fiji. Since my father worked for the Pacific Community (SPC), I did my primary school and high school studies here in Fiji,” the eager 22-year-old explained.

“I have been doing my Bachelor of Education in PNG, and I am currently in the beautiful country for a

holiday, so I was like, why not? I miss Fiji, and I want to come back!”

“FNU is the perfect place, as they say, to turn dreams into reality, which was also this year’s Open Day theme, I believe FNU will turn my dreams into reality: to go out and teach young people in the community!”

Karkal, the eldest of three children and the only girl, said her late grandmother has always inspired her in life.

“My late grandmother has served as an inspiration to me in my life because she never had the opportunity to attend school—she was the youngest of eight children, but she still learnt everything on her own, and really well!” she exclaimed.

“I want to be a teacher because I read a lot, and I want to instill my love for learning in young children who want to learn about the world around them. I think teaching is the best thing I can do.”

Karkal also commended the services provided by staff at the Academic Office.

“I decided to cross-credit my programme to FNU, and I am ready to start my studies at FNU in Semester 1, 2024,” she said.

“I sort of came here on a whim, and I did not want to make the application online; face-to-face applications are always better, and it was such a fun atmosphere to come and enrol, at the Open Day. The staff at the Academic Office were nice and very helpful.”

Karkal believes FNU will turn her dreams into reality



Students at the FNU Open Day at Namaka Campus.

FNU West Open Day Hailed a Success

“To the best of my knowledge, this was the best organised Open Day having the largest number of students turning up at Natabua Campus.”

Head of Ba Campus, Niraj Dharmendra also commended the University students and staff for working together to provide an exciting Open Day experience for high school students and visitors.

“The displays at this year’s Open Day were very nicely set out and the schools were very interested in looking at the projects that were constructed by the different departments,” he said.

“Most of the students were very eager to join FNU, and I am glad that our TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) programmes were very much marketed.”

It was also a successful one for Namaka Campus after the campus, led by the Head of Campus and the Head of School Economics and Finance, Rusi Vakaloloma, hosted the campus’s own Open Day after six years.

The Fiji National University’s (FNU) Open Day held in the Western Division on 6 October 2023 was hailed a success.

Students from about 34 schools attended the Open Day at Natabua Campus while at Namaka Campus, students turned up with their teachers from various schools.

Students from schools as far as Magodro Secondary School and Sigatoka Valley Secondary School departed their respective venues as early as 6am to be part of the 2023 FNU Open Day.

Head of Natabua Campus, Perry Gabriel defined the Open Day as a ‘grand success’.

“I would like to thank the staff and students of Natabua Campus, Naceva (National Training and Productivity Centre) and Ba Campus for the tremendous support and preparation towards the 2023 FNU Open Day,” said Perry.

“I would also like to acknowledge our sponsors, Coca Cola Euro Pacific, Vodafone Fiji, CJ Patel, Telecom Fiji Limited, Plan International, Communications Fiji Limited, Fiji Water, Vinod Patel, CK’s Mega Bargain, Flour Mills of Fiji, The Fiji Times, Fiji Sun, Pacific Energy, Jack’s of Fiji, Star Printery, Brother International, Asco Motors and GEM Fiji.”

“Our industry partners that were present at Natabua Campus, Mix FM, Bank of South Pacific, Fiji Police Force, Fiji Revenue and Customs Service, Tertiary Scholarship and Loans Service, Consumer Council of Fiji, iLagi Photography Fiji, Blackbox Photobooth, not forgetting the FNU students enterprise group for the food and the Natabua Campus band, led by the Lecturer in Music Education, Lasarus Daveta for the entertainment and also renowned magician, Junior Mangal for drawing the students in.”

Fiji National University alumni, Isikeli Navuni is thankful to the University for providing vast opportunities for many secondary-level students.

Navuni completed his tertiary education at FNU’s Natabua Campus years ago and is now a Year 12 and Year 13 teacher at Magodro Secondary School, located in the interior parts of Ba.

He said the recent developments at the Natabua Campus were positive and would add to the student learning experience.

“I am a former student of FNU, and coming back to the Natabua Campus after 20 years, I can see a vast change; I can see great learning infrastructure,” he said.

He said that the opportunity to attend the 2023 FNU Open Day at Natabua Campus was a great boost for the students, given their geographical location.

“Our school is right in the interior, so the locality is far away from the urban centres, and coming here to Natabua Campus is a big boost for the students,” he said.

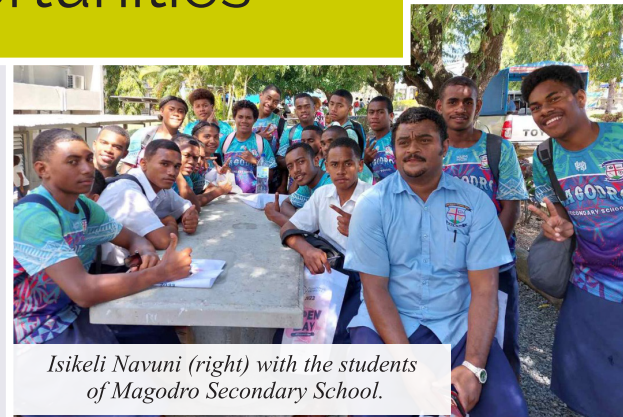
FNU Alumni Appreciative of Open Day Opportunities

“We visited the Open Day with our Year 10, Year 12 and Year 13 students as they are nearing the end of their secondary school careers and going soon into tertiary-level education.”

He said the students learned many things, especially regarding their different subject combinations and how this could be aligned to the University’s entry requirements.

“FNU provides a wide range of academic opportunities for these students,” he highlighted.

“Hopefully, in two or three years from now, we will see more students from our school joining FNU.”



Isikeli Navuni (right) with the students of Magodro Secondary School.



Assistant Professor Dr Satish Chand (left), Dr Sofia Ali and Mr Fabiano Tikoinavuso.

FNU Academics Grateful for China Exchange Visit

Three Fiji National University (FNU) academics were given the opportunity to be part of an exchange project in Shanghai, China, earlier this month.

The College of Humanities and Education (CHE) academics included Assistant Professor Dr Satish Chand, Assistant Professor and Acting Head of School, School of Education Dr Sofia Ali and Lecturer in Education Fabiano Tikoinavuso.

The team attended the Belt and Road Shanghai Autumn 2023 Exchange Project on Integrated Training of Teachers before and after Service. The duration of the project was from 9-20 October.

Dr Ali said the project was funded by the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission (SHMEC) and organised by the Teacher

Education Centre, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation), and the Research Institute for International and Comparative Education at Shanghai Normal University.

“The project aimed to facilitate the exchange of educational ideas and experiences among education administrators, university educators, researchers, school principals, and teachers from the Belt and Road countries,” said Dr Ali.

“It also aimed to explore the system design and performance mechanisms of preservice training and the lifelong development of teachers.”

She said the exchange project, which was themed ‘Integrated Training of Teachers Before and After Service’, welcomed around 36 participants from 19 countries around the world.

“We are very proud and thankful to the organisers and FNU for allowing us to be part of this and attend this 2023 exchange project,” she added.

“The activities of the project were a fruitful combination of seminars, school visits, and other cultural activities in two modules: international trends in pre-service teacher education and teacher preparation and in-service training.”





SCAN TO REGISTER

MY FNU

Talanoa

with our **Alumni**



From Mystery to Mastery: The Inspiring Journey of Bisal Bikash Ram

In the bustling world of university life, where each student embarks on a unique academic adventure, one particular journey stands out – that of Bisal Bikash Ram.

His voyage at the Fiji National University (FNU) began as a mystery, an uncharted territory waiting to be explored. Little did he know that this academic journey would lead him to forge lasting friendships and invaluable connections, ultimately transforming his life.

He is a proud graduate of the College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST), having graduated with a Diploma in Engineering (Civil) (Level 6) and a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering (Honours).

"I started off as a stranger to FNU, which everyone is, but ended up building friendships and forming affiliations with numerous people at FNU. I commenced my educational journey in 2016 with a Diploma in Engineering (Civil) (Level 6) and later pursued bridging units to qualify for a Degree programme," he said.

"While juggling my daily commitments, I achieved my objective and graduated in 2020. One of the most valuable experiences was studying with three different cohorts of students each year. This served as motivation and empowered me to make informed decisions and offer guidance to the younger students within the cohort."

Education

Ram attained his primary education at Sawani Indian School and later on pursued his secondary

education from Saraswati College. After completing his secondary education, he realised that barely anyone from his family belonged to the engineering industry. This challenged him and motivated him to pursue his education at the Fiji National University (FNU).

"I grew up in the Small village of Luvuluvu Bua, Vanualevu and attended my Class 1 and Class 2 at Bua Primary School. When our land lease expired, we had to move from Bua to Waila, Nausori. My father and mother took up work as

a driver for a supermarket, while my mother was a babysitter," he shared.

"I then continued my primary school education at Sawani Indian School until 2010. After looking at my parents' hardships, I started working with my elder brother, Manoj Ram. My brother and I worked together at a Suva supermarket, enabling us to support our family during the school break."

"In 2011, I started my secondary school studies at Saraswati College whilst working as a wheelbarrow boy at a supermarket during weekends for some time when I got a job in the Cinema to work as an usher part-time. I continued my education and was doing well with my academics. I had overcome all the hurdles that came through and helped my parents in any way possible. I would say life treats everyone differently, no matter their age."

"After completing Years 12 and 13, I found myself uncertain about the path to pursue for my tertiary education. It wasn't until I realised that engineering was my calling and becoming the first in my family to venture into this field. I commenced my tertiary journey, but a significant accident befell my father during my studies, nearly crippling our family's income. To support my family, I took on a role as a Clerical Clerk at the Waila Water Treatment Plant within the Water Authority of Fiji while continuing my education simultaneously.

Subsequently, I transitioned to employment at Chands Engineering and Project Managers, where I balanced work and studies. Just when things

were progressing smoothly, my father suffered a major heart attack during the COVID-19 pandemic, thrusting my family into a severe financial crisis.

Career

Ram stood firm on the saying that when there is a will, then there is a way. Despite fighting many hidden battles, he never lost hope and continued to work hard.

"My engineering career has included a wide range of engineering projects, principally in building services, concepts, designs, and detailed documentation leading to construction, which included work on several Retail, Commercial, Residential and Medical Building Projects within our economy," he said.

"I now run an engineering and construction business known as Conceptave Design Services. After being in the industry for more than seven years and acquiring greater knowledge from FNU, I realised that it was about time I could run my own business during the pandemic, I opened up the business, and it has flourished since then."

Motivation

Ram acknowledged the support of his lecturer, Maika Tuicakau, who once motivated him to do well and ensure that the trade he learned would give him dividends.

"I am immensely grateful for the incredible lecturers I had the privilege of learning from during my time at Fiji National University. Maika Tuicakau's wisdom continues to resonate with me: 'Whatever you do, remember that's your bread and butter.' These words and my parents' enduring encouragement to 'be consistent with your grades, as the transcript reflects a lot about an individual student' have been my guiding lights on this academic journey," he said.

"This accomplishment also honours my late grandfather, Dhan Raj, who set excellent examples for our family back in Luvuluvu, Bua. My parents, Suresh Ram and Roshni Devi are the bedrock of my entire journey, without whom this achievement would have been impossible."

"I am also thankful to my wife, Kazal Ram, for her unwavering support throughout the journey, helping me navigate all the hardships that came our way."

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:** Charlene Lanyon | **Design & Layout:** Vetaia Dakua

Division Head: Director Marketing and Communications, Karen Lobendahn

Writers: Jennis Naidu, Pravin Narain, Nicolette Chambers, Christal Kapoor, Torella Dominiko, Fotagkauriro Aisea

Contributors: Acting Vice-Chancellor Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba

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

Follow us on     