



Soaring to New Academic Heights



"THERE'S ALWAYS HOPE AT FNU" - APISAI NAWAI

ANSHITA ASPIRES TO CONTINUE HER FAMILY'S LEGACY IN AGRICULTURE

SCAN
FOR ECOPY





Prospective students seeking out application assistance at FNU's roadshow.

FNU

– Your Pathway to Your Dreams



Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba
FNU Vice-Chancellor

Bula Vinaka and a warm welcome to you all,

I am deeply honoured to address you as your Vice-Chancellor in the first edition of the FNUNIKUA 2024. The theme for this month's edition is **'Soaring to New Academic Heights'**. It captures the spirit of growth, achievement, and limitless possibilities that await each one of you here at the Fiji National University.

At FNU, we believe in the transformative power of education – a force that can turn dreams into reality and allow you to serve your community and the country.

As the national University, FNU looks forward to another year of providing quality and accessible education to all Fijians and remaining a beacon of knowledge, innovation, and excellence in the Pacific region.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all the Year 12 and Year 13 students who have received their results this month. All your hard work and sacrifices have paid off. While some students may not have reached their intended targets, do not let this setback hinder you from exploring alternative learning opportunities available at FNU that align with your interests and ambitions.

One of the trademarks of FNU is its identity as a dual-sector institution, offering a diverse range of educational pathways. Whether you are drawn to higher education programmes or eager to explore the practical realms of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes, FNU has something for everyone.

For those pursuing higher education, our colleges and the distinguished faculties and comprehensive programmes are tailored to foster critical thinking, innovation, and a well-rounded understanding of your chosen field. Whether your passion lies in the arts, sciences, business, health or any other discipline, FNU is committed to preparing you for the dynamic challenges of the workforce and the future.

For those pursuing skills training, our TVET programmes are designed to equip you with hands-on skills and knowledge that are relevant and essential for success in various industries. These programmes only offer immediate entry into the workforce and also empower you to make meaningful contributions to your chosen field.

As you embark on this journey with us, I encourage you to embrace the opportunities that our university provides for you to spread your wings and soar to new heights of academic and personal success.

Learning & Teaching Support Services

In this edition, our Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) provides an in-depth report on the types of learning and teaching support services available at our university and how students can access this. Students can be assured that FNU will provide

them with the required support in any area of learning.

I encourage you to actively engage in the vibrant community at FNU. Join clubs, mentorship, and buddy programmes, participate in extracurricular activities, and connect with fellow students. Take advantage of the resources, including our friendly administrative and academic staff, that are available to support your academic journey.

As you go through your journey, remember that your time at FNU is not just about acquiring knowledge but about unlocking your full potential.

Apply Now

Our applications for enrolment for Semester 1, 2024 are still open. Be sure to visit our campuses and enrolment centres. Our academic staff are there and always ready to listen to and advise you about the programmes you are interested in. Our staff are more than happy to assist you through the enrolment process.

Students can visit any of our Enrolment Centres in Koronivia, Nasinu, Derrick, Namaka, Natabua, Ba and Labasa campuses.

Students can also visit our website www.fnu.ac.fj/student/ or email admission@fnu.ac.fj. For further information or queries, students can also Text (Toll-Free) to **857** for Vodafone and Inkk users.

Enrolment Drive

Our Enrolment Drive Team will conduct the final Semester 1, 2024 roadshow from February 1– 3. This is another avenue for you to receive enrolment assistance, academic counselling, programme details, campus information and instant offer letters (if eligible).

If you are in Ba, Lautoka, Nadi, Rakiraki, Tavua, Sigatoka, Navua and Nausori, be sure to look out for our Enrolment Drive Teams. We will be in your towns and cities to help you turn your dreams into reality.

Semester 1, 2024

I would like to wish all our prospective, new, and continuing students all the best as we begin this new academic year of learning.

Be mindful of the responsibility that comes with your education. Seize every opportunity to learn, experience, and engage in activities that will support your academic and personal growth.

Do not hesitate to seek help from our dedicated college staff, peers, mentors, tutors, lecturers and support staff.

I am confident that the FNU community, with its rich diversity and collective spirit, will be the catalyst for your success.

Let this be a year of breaking barriers, and surpassing expectations. I am confident that each of you has the potential to soar to new academic heights, and I look forward to witnessing your achievements.

Wishing you all a fantastic start to the academic year!

Vinaka Vakalevu.



Empowering Student Success:

Support for New and Continuing Students

Bula vinaka to you all, and a special welcome to our new students joining the Fiji National University family!

Whether you are starting your journey at FNU or continuing your education, remember you do not have to go through it alone.

The essential services at the heart of FNU’s learning and teaching focuses on ensuring quality, relevance, flexibility, student engagement, recognition, and internalisation. These are targeted through our primary services: Learning Support, Teaching Support, and Open Educational Resources.

We have experienced and competent people here at our university to give advice, encouragement, and support throughout your academic year. Our Student Success Specialists are friendly and dedicated to helping you begin your higher education journey. Do not hesitate to ask for help when needed.

Guiding Your Transition to FNU

FNU is aware that as first-year students, many things will be new. To ensure that all first-year students transition smoothly into university, FNU has tailor-made free support services that will help students adjust to university life and excel in their studies.

Remember that your first-year experience at FNU will be what you make of it, so make the most of your learning opportunities!

Below are some of the free support services at CLTE.

First-Year Experience (FYE) App

FNU’s *First Year Experience (FYE)* app is readily available to make it easier for first-year students to adjust to campus life. It gives students access to helpful tools to create personalised timetables, get the latest university updates, get their questions answered, and assist other students with healthy discussions. Students can download the app for free from the Google Play Store for Android devices and the App Store for Apple devices and log in with your username and password as soon as you enrol at FNU.

Succeed@FNU

Succeed@FNU is a free online course accessible on Moodle, designed to get students ready for their studies at FNU. The course is designed to help you discover your potential, understand FNU’s expectations and rules, explore support systems, and recognise the importance of self-care. By finishing this course, you can be confident that you’re an informed student who knows where to find the necessary support services.

First Year Fridays

Engage with our Student Success Specialists in virtual sessions on Fridays from Weeks 2 to 5, where you can learn about university life, share experiences, and clarify doubts.

Peer Support Programmes:

NoquBuddy

From Weeks 1 to 7 of the semester, the noquBuddy Programme connects first year students with experienced FNU students to help them settle into university life. Both mentors and mentees can apply using simple registration forms available on the CLTE website. An international student mentorship programme is also available, along with survival guides for first years and international students.

Peer Assisted Learning (PAL)

Peer Assisted Learning is an organised peer support academic programme that provides an excellent chance for collaborative group work in your course. You can compare notes, talk about important subjects, create learning strategies, and connect with fellow students in a supportive setting. We invite you to participate in PAL sessions, led by peer leaders, specifically tailored for challenging courses to enhance your performance. These one-hour sessions take place from Weeks 3 to 15 of the semester. Students can check the PAL schedule on FNUPR or CLTE website to attend.

Study Groups

For courses not covered under PAL, we can assist you in joining or forming study groups for collaborative learning.

Learning Hubs

Math Help Hub (MH2) offers face-to-face mathematical and statistical support sessions, while *English Language Hub (ELH)* provides tutoring services for writing and communication skills, with ESL-qualified Student Success Specialists available for face-to-face and virtual sessions.

One-on-One Consultation

Our one-on-one consultation is an exclusive and confidential personalised session with a Student Success Specialist. It provides you with the chance to talk, discuss, examine, and create specific strategies to address your academic concerns.

Online Enrichment Courses

Learning to Learn Online (LTLO), *English as Second Language courses* and *Foundation Mathematics*

Proficiency Assessment (FMPA) are non-credit, self-paced courses to develop your learning skills.

Guide to Effective Learning

Access comprehensive guides on various topics throughout your learning journey via Moodle.

Glossary of Terms

Refer to the glossary on the CLTE website for meanings of frequently used terms at FNU.

Workshops

Participate in workshops on topics like *Literature Review*, *Report Writing*, and *Mendeley*.

Ready to begin? Schedule appointments for the services you wish to utilise and enhance your learning and personal success. The schedules and links to reach out to the various services can be accessed through CLTE website and FNUPR.

For further assistance, email us at clte@fnu.ac.fj or visit our website at <https://clte.fnu.ac.fj/>. Follow us on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube. We’re eager to hear from you!

I hope these support services will help you transition well into your studies at FNU, help you break barriers, and catapult you to new academic heights.

Wishing you well in your academic journey with us!

Vinaka Vakalevu.



Dr Jimaima Lako
Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor
Learning & Teaching

From Cane Fields to Civil Engineering



Netani Vuatalevu

cassava and pineapple farm. Amid the swaying stalks and the harsh demands of life, young Netani Vuatalevu dared to dream beyond the confines of his circumstances.

The humble Penang Sangam High School graduate (pictured above) received his offer letter for a Bachelor of Civil Engineering (Honours) at the Fiji National University's (FNU), College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST) during the 2024 FNU Roadshow at the Rakiraki old market.

In the heart of Fiji's sunshine coast of Rakiraki, where the golden rays of the sun kiss the sprawling sugar cane fields, exists an incredible journey of resilience and triumph.

It is a journey that begins in the calloused hands of a young boy, whose days were spent labouring under the relentless sun, in Rakiraki's famed sugar cane fields and his

"It had always been my dream to become a Civil Engineer and I was determined to achieve that dream no matter what came my way," said Vuatalevu.

"The work done by FNU has always been so inspiring. When I attended the FNU Open Day last year, my wish was to join FNU and today my wish has come true."

Vuatalevu was accompanied by his cousin who revealed that he worked as a labourer in sugar cane fields and would sell mangoes and crops from his farm along the roadside to help support his family and to save for his education.

When asked about what motivated him in his most trying times, the Nakorokula, Ra native smiled fighting back tears as he said, "My father."

"My father works extremely hard to support our family and he always taught me the importance of working hard towards my dreams," said Vuatalevu.

"I am so happy that now I can tell him that I am on my way to achieving my childhood dream of becoming an Engineer, all thanks to FNU."

He also revealed that his teacher, Munesh Gounder, pushed him towards pursuing his dreams.

Vuatalevu is looking forward to his new chapter of

life at FNU's Derrick Campus in Samabula and is determined to join the university rugby team soon.

"I will always keep my parents and my humble beginnings in my mind no matter where I am, that is my motivation, and I would like to encourage other young people, especially from rural areas to never stop dreaming and working towards their dreams."

Semester 1, 2024 Applications

Interested students can Apply Now for Semester 1, 2024 studies via the FNU website at <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.

Dritika Joins HR dynasty at FNU



Dritika Prasad pictured with her mum (left) and a relative.

Dritika Prasad, a young woman follows in the footsteps of her sister Artika to study at the Fiji National University's (FNU)

College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies (CBHTS) and in the same programme.

Her recent enrolment in the Bachelor of Commerce (Industrial Relations, & Human Resource Management, and Management) programme at FNU signifies not only her ambition but also her contribution to a remarkable family legacy within this domain.

Prasad's (pictured left) journey began at FNU's Roadshow in Nausori, where she seized the opportunity to pursue her passion for human resources. This programme at FNU's CBHTS provides her with a robust academic foundation and the skills necessary to thrive in this dynamic field.

Prasad, who scored 284 out of 400 in the Fiji Year 13 Examination, said she was excited to be part of FNU to pursue her further

education.

"I saw it as a field where I wouldn't just be orchestrating successful careers, but building something deeper," Prasad said.

"I wanted to nurture empowered teams, the beating heart of any thriving organisation. It wasn't just about numbers and spreadsheets; it was about human connection, building trust, and unleashing potential in people."

"It was about being a catalyst, a weaver of dreams, helping individuals and teams find their rhythm, their unique symphony of success."

Her mother, Mesalin Lata, echoed her sentiment, expressing immense pride in her daughter's accomplishment.

"My eldest daughter Artika thrived at FNU paving the way for her younger sister. Now, I get to watch her write her own story, armed with the same spirit and determination. Watching them all succeed is the greatest reward a mother could ask for," Lata said.

The Toil of a Market Vendor for Education

Amid the bustling atmosphere of the enrolment drive in Sigatoka, a voice cut through the air, "Praise the Lord!". These were the heartfelt words of Amelia Kidi, a mother overwhelmed with joy and gratitude for a milestone reached.

An emotional Kidi (pictured right) uttered praises to the heavens and thanked the Fiji National University (FNU) team, when her daughter, Katalaini Gauna was handed her offer letter on the day. Gauna, an aspiring teacher, enrolled in the Bachelor of Education (Primary) programme in the College of Humanities and Education (CHE).

"Every question that we had in mind about the programme, was answered by the FNU team. We are now leaving here with her offer letter. I am so happy and proud of her," said Kidi as she wiped away tears of joy.

"This makes Katalaini the first in our family to pursue a teaching career. I am so happy for

her and proud of her for taking the initiative to pursue further education despite the challenges we face."

Kidi had been silently toiling to finance her daughter's education through vegetable sales at the Sigatoka market.

She would spend \$60 a day on travelling expenses to travel from Vunatovau village in Nokonoko, Nadroga to sell vegetable produce at the Sigatoka market to support her family and her children's education.

Through the toil of a market vendor's hands, Gauna can pursue a career in teaching at FNU. Gauna will soon embark on a journey that will see her become the first teacher in their family.

"My labour as a market vendor is even more meaningful seeing it benefit my children. I am optimistic that three years from now, we will commemorate another milestone when Katalaini completes her programme."



Proud mum Amelia Kidi (right) is all smiles with her daughter Katalaini Gauna at the Sigatoka Roadshow last week.

Anshita aspires to continue her family's legacy in agriculture

In the quiet settlement of Koronubu in Ba, Anshita, an 18-year-old with a heart fuelled by her dreams aspires to continue her family's heritage in the field of agriculture.

Anshita (*pictured right*) will be pursuing her dream at the Fiji National University's (FNU) College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF) Bachelor of Science in Agriculture programme in Semester 1, 2024 at the Ba campus.

The former Xavier College student received her offer letter instantly at FNU's Roadshow venue in Ba earlier this month.

"I wanted to study Bachelor of Science in Agriculture programme, and it was my dream to be in the agriculture sector- since I come from a farming background, it will be good for me to continue my family legacy in the same field," Anshita said.

"My father specialises in sugarcane, and vegetable farming so I found the inspiration from him to enrol into this programme. They say that agriculture is a field

that is not in demand in Fiji but I believe there is a huge demand in agriculture field itself as long as you have the will, you can grow in the agricultural sector.

Motivation for Anshita, stems from the shadows of her three older brothers, each carving their unique paths. With one donning a nurse's uniform, another venturing into technical expertise, and the third seeking horizons in Australia, Anshita emerges as the beacon of differentiation, seeking a field where she can truly be herself.

"My brothers have motivated me for the majority of my life, I have three brothers, and they have all studied at FNU. Having brother who are older than me, there has always been a lot of competition between us, and I wanted to pursue a field that is different from theirs."

"Focus on yourself and don't be swayed by the opinions of others, the negativity that surrounds a chosen path should be but a passing storm, not a deterrent to the journey ahead."



Aisea's Journey to Academic Distinction

From the Fiji National University's (FNU) College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST), a story of determination and triumph unfolds.

Meet Michael Aisea, a seasoned mechanic of two decades, now a FNU Diploma in Transport Technology and Management (Roads) (Level 6) student, defying age norms and pursuing academic distinction.

Recognising the need to upgrade his academic qualifications after two decades in the mechanical trade, he enrolled in the programme at FNU's Derrick Campus in 2022.

"I believe that education is the key to progress and success in life. I realised through my studies that the curriculum aligned well with my practical experience," said Aisea.

"There is also a wealth of knowledge learned in the classroom that you will never be able to learn in your field of work."

growth and professional success. Age should never be a hindrance. I am past 40 years of age, and it has been 18 years since I last studied at the tertiary level with TPAF (now the National Training & Productivity Centre)."

Aisea's story also sheds light on the lesser-explored field of transport technology and management.

"Many students settle for more common technological and engineering fields. The interesting bit about this course is that it comes with a promise of automatic job placement with the Land Transport Authority of Fiji (LTA). So, for aspiring LTA officers, and legal inspection and enforcement officers, the School of Transport at FNU is your pathway to success."

Aisea now looks forward to completing his programme and working for a year before pursuing further studies at the degree and master's level.



Single Mother of Two Soars To New Heights

Being a single mother of two children means nothing else but providing the best for her family.

For 41-year-old Litiana Koroibola (*pictured right*), soaring to new heights in terms of her education, is as equally important as taking care of the needs of her two children.

Returning to complete her tertiary education was the best decision she made in the year 2023.

She recently attained a Bachelor of Education Early Childhood from the Fiji National University (FNU) last year.

"Passing the GPA requirement from the University to do my Postgraduate studies was a dream come true," she said.

Originally from Saunaka Village in Nadi, Koroibola decided to pursue a Postgraduate Diploma in Education with the Fiji National University this year.

She was among the many students to receive her offer letter at this year's FNU Roadshow at Lautoka's TappooCity.

She shares maternal links to Vitogo Village in Lautoka where she is currently residing.

"I am teaching at the Early Childhood Public Education Centre, a private kindergarten which is attached to Lautoka Primary School," said Koroibola.

"This is my fourth year teaching at the school, and eight years since I have been in the teaching profession."

She said she was inspired by her mother who is also an Early Childhood Education (ECE) teacher.

"My mum is an ECE teacher and so I made the decision to follow in her footsteps," she said.

"I love being around children and that is the main reason why I took up this course in 2016.

"I did my Foundation studies in Mathematics and English and then I continued with my Higher Education studies."

Her advice to the youth and school

leavers – there is no harm in trying everything, never underestimate yourself and keep having positive thoughts.





Setaita Adi (right) with another successful applicant at the 2024 FNU Roadshow in Rakiraki.

Vatukacevaceva Lass Aims High

Vatukacevaceva native and Penang Sangam student, Setaita Adi always felt called towards a career in journalism from a young age.

Little did she know that the first step towards the realisation of her dream would take place right in the middle of her hometown in Rakiraki.

Adi (pictured above) and her mother, Salanieta Bavelo arrived bright and early at the FNU Roadshow at the Rakiraki Old Market determined to find a spot at FNU for Adi.

“Setaita did not want to attend any other university from the start, she was always adamant about studying at FNU so when we heard about the roadshow in our town, we knew we had to drop by to find a place for her,” revealed Bavelo.

“I am grateful for FNU for thinking about Fijians living in rural and remote communities and bringing their services closer to our homes, it shows that they are truly a university that belongs to the Fijian people.”

Bavelo added that the FNU roadshow helped families to save money and time that would be spent on travelling to Suva, Nadi

or Lautoka to help their children with further studies.

Setaita was one of the first successful applicants in Rakiraki and received her offer letter to pursue a Bachelor of Media and Communication at the College of Humanities and Education.

“I am overwhelmed by how easy and simple the entire process was,” stated Adi.

“I am the first in my family to attend university and I am happy that I got into the university and programme of my choice.

I have always wanted to join FNU and attending the Open Day last year made me more determined about my choice.”

She stated the reason behind her choice was the fun learning environment, practicals and industrial attachment, especially in her field of study.

“Hands-on learning experience is important as it shapes you for the working world and guarantees that you will be able to cope with the intensity and demands of the media industry.

Adi hopes to further her studies after completing her Bachelors with hopes of securing a job in public relations in the future.

“There’s Always Hope At FNU” – Apisai Nawai



Apisai Nawai Junior at the FNU Roadshow in Rakiraki.

Apisai Nawai Junior and his father Apisai Nawai Senior were on their way to Suva to gather information about FNU’s programmes when they heard that FNU’s Roadshow team was in their hometown of Rakiraki.

Apisai Junior (pictured above) is a recent graduate of Ra High School and was determined to join FNU after they visited his high school during their Career Discovery for High School Students programme and his attendance at the FNU Open Day last year.

“I was impressed by the welcoming environment and the programmes that were on offer at FNU,” said Junior.

“The booths at the open day were filled with information that made it clear that I wanted to join FNU after high school.”

Junior received his offer letter for a Diploma in Architectural Drafting (Level 6) at FNU’s College of Engineering Science and Technology at the Rakiraki Old Market, saving him and his father’s time and money.

“I did not perform as expected in my external exam, but FNU had a place for me, and I am overjoyed that I can also pursue my dreams at FNU,” said an elated Apisai Junior.

His emotional father fought back tears as he thanked FNU for making life easier for numerous parents especially those who are struggling financially.

“I am thankful and happy that FNU thinks about our children and our families and has brought such important services right to our town, it saves us so much time, energy and money,” said Apisai Senior.

“I want to encourage other parents to bring their children to the FNU team at the Rakiraki market so that they too can achieve something in life.”

With a sense of renewed hope, Apisai Junior had only one message for fellow Fijians – “Kua ni yalo lailai!”

“Don’t be disheartened if you did not do well in your exams, even if you did not meet the expected mark, come and see the team from FNU, there’s always hope for you at FNU, they will help you secure your future no matter what your mark is!”

Semester 1, 2024 Applications

Interested students can Apply Now for Semester 1, 2024 studies via the FNU website at <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.

Pandey’s journey to becoming a Doctor

It has been a long journey from the bustling streets of Varanasi (Benaras), India, to the sun-drenched shores of Fiji, but for 24-year-old Gaurav Pandey, the destination was worth every mile.

Pandey (pictured bottom right) graduated from the Fiji National University’s (FNU) College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS) last year, and is ready to serve the people with his knowledge and skills gained while studying at FNU.

“I am happy to have accomplished my goal at the Fiji National University, as the University accepted me with open arms and allowed me to make memories in Fiji,” Pandey said.

“It has been a challenging journey for me, but I managed to get to my destination with the award.

“It was tough staying away from home to chase this dream was a tough call, but seeing this moment, it feels like everything I’ve been through has been worth it.”

Pandey’s journey is one of resilience and determination. Away from the comfort of family and friends, he found a new home in Fiji, embraced the island nation’s vibrant culture, and thrived in the rigorous academic environment of CMNHS.

“I have travelled to Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia, South Africa and have had a feel of surrounding and education but did not join in any academics. The reason I chose FNU is because it is considered as one of the top Universities in Fiji. I have also received the Dean’s honours award in MBBS as well,” Pandey shared.

“FNU did not only push me academically but also instilled in me the importance of compassion and empathy, qualities that are essential for any doctor.”

“Giving back to the community is something I’m passionate about. Seeing the smiles on people’s faces when they receive medical care that’s what motivates me.”

Gaurav Pandey’s story is one of hope and inspiration. It is a testament to the power of dreams, hard work, and the unwavering support of a community that stretches across continents.

As he embarks on his career as a doctor, Pandey carries with him not just his medical degree, but the lessons learned, the friendships forged, and the unwavering spirit that helped him make his island dream a reality.

Semester 1, 2024 Applications

Interested students can Apply Now for Semester 1, 2024 studies via the FNU website at <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.



Gaurav Pandey at the FNU Graduation Ceremony.

Matarisiga Embraces the Power of Education at FNU

Adi Unaisi Lewavukivuki Matarisiga travelled from California, United States of America to graduate from the Fiji National University's (FNU), College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences' (CMNHS) Bachelor of Nursing programme last December.

Matarisiga (*pictured right*) is an inspiration to others who may be considering returning to school or pursuing a career change. The 46-year-old has demonstrated that it is possible to achieve your goals, no matter what your age or background.

She also proved that age is not a barrier to pursuing further education in life.

“With over two decades of dedicated service in the nursing field, I’ve witnessed first-hand the transformative impact of healthcare on individuals and communities. My passion for nursing ignited over 23 years ago when I graduated with a diploma in 2000, embarking on a fulfilling career that has taken me from hospital settings to the international stage,” she shared.

“When FNU introduced its online Bachelor of Nursing programme, it presented an invaluable opportunity to further my education and enhance my professional capabilities while balancing my existing commitments.”

Serving as an expatriate nurse in Niue Island, Matarisiga enrolled in FNU's online programme in 2021, seeking a path to professional advancement.

“The online format was a perfect fit for my situation, allowing me to continue working and providing care

while pursuing my academic goals,” she explained.

“FNU’s programme offered the flexibility and rigour I sought, and it directly aligned with my aspirations to advance in the nursing profession.”

With five years of dedicated service in Niue and subsequent relocation to the United States, Matarisiga's dedication to nursing remained unwavering.

“Completing my bachelor’s degree was a personal milestone, and I am incredibly grateful for the knowledge and skills I gained through FNU’s online programme,” she shared.

“FNU’s commitment to providing quality education that is accessible to learners worldwide was instrumental in my journey.”

Matarisiga said education is not merely about acquiring facts and figures; it is about cultivating critical thinking, fostering creativity, and nurturing empathy.

“It is about expanding our horizons, challenging our assumptions, and embracing the diversity of human thought. Through education, we become agents of change, capable of shaping a brighter future for ourselves and the world around us,” she said.

“My father, the former President of the Methodist Church in Fiji, Reverend Ili Vunisuwai’s words have echoed in my mind throughout my life, an unwavering reminder that the pursuit of knowledge knows no boundaries, neither physical nor temporal. He instilled in me the belief that education is the bedrock of personal



Matarisiga travelled to Fiji for her graduation in Bachelor of Nursing programme.

growth and societal advancement, a flame that should never be extinguished.”

“I encourage everyone to embrace the transformative power of education, to never cease seeking knowledge and understanding. Let us challenge ourselves, push our boundaries, and ascend to the peaks of our intellectual potential. The only time we should truly stop learning is when our hands are on our chests when our earthly journey has come to an end. Until then, let us continue to learn, grow, and thrive, fueled by the insatiable thirst for knowledge that lies within each of us.”

Bativanalau Ready to Achieve Childhood Dream



Vasemaca Bativanalau pictured with her parents receives a prize from our FNU Roadshow Team at the Rakiraki Roadshow.

Vasemaca Bativanalau's story epitomises the resilience and tenacity that define those who dare to turn childhood dreams into tangible reality, as she paves her way toward the realisation of her lifelong ambition at the Fiji National University.

From a young age, she dreamt of being part of Fiji's lucrative tourism industry, a quick stop at the 2024 FNU Roadshow at the Rakiraki old market successfully set that dream into motion as Bativanalau (*pictured above*) became the recipient of the first offer letter for higher education in the province of Ra.

The Saint Francis College graduate joined the Bachelor of Hospitality and Hotel Management programme offered at the College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies at FNU's Namaka Campus.

"I chose FNU because I love the variety of programmes that are being offered at the university," said Bativanalau.

“I attended the FNU Open Day last

year and got to find out more about the programmes on offer and how exciting university studies can be at FNU, that is when I decided to join FNU for my tertiary education.”

Originally from Saivou in Ra with maternal links to Lau, she was accompanied by her parents who found out about the roadshow through Facebook.

Her parents were very happy and excited about their daughter's new chapter in life and were glad that Bativanalau chose to study at FNU especially at a campus conveniently located in the west.

Bativanalau said that she is looking forward to starting the academic year and taking the first steps towards her dream job.

“I have always wanted to work in the tourism industry, and this is the beginning of my exciting journey towards that dream. I can’t wait to start school, meet new friends, and just enjoy the journey towards my end goal.”

Chand Urges Youths to Do What Their Heart Desires

If you have a passion for becoming anything in life and if your heart is willing to do what you want to follow, go for it

These were the encouraging words of 19-year-old Sheel Chand of Lautoka.

The former Central College Lautoka student enrolled this month at the Fiji National University's College of Engineering, Science and Technology with a Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Electrical Engineering.

He was fortunate enough to receive an offer letter during the 2024 FNU Roadshow at TappooCity in Lautoka earlier this month.

Chand (*pictured below*) was a tech-science student at Central College Lautoka.

He said it was always his dream to pursue his dream in the field of electrical engineering, drawing inspiration from his brother.

“My brother is an electrical engineer, so I want to follow his footsteps,” said Chand.

"I am excited to receive my Offer Letter today and cannot wait to start classes soon at the FNU Derrick Campus."

He added that his next goal was to succeed in his current programme and graduate from the FNU.

“If someone is willing to do a course and they have interest in it, they should take it up because they will become successful in life someday,” he said.



Sheel Chand after receiving his Offer Letter from NTPC Training Officer, Tevita Baleira.



MY FNU

Talanoa

with our Alumni



Rasuaki at his FNU graduation in 2021.

Once nestled in the heart of the lush interior of Ra in Vanuakula, Eva Rasuaki's journey from a humble upbringing to becoming a dedicated teacher at Nairai District School is a testament to perseverance and familial support.

Background

As the eldest of three siblings, Rasuaki was raised by his aunt, Makelesi Nalawa. Growing up in a close-knit community, his childhood was shaped by the warmth of family bonds and the nurturing care of his stay-at-home aunt. It was through the support of his family that he found the strength to navigate the challenges of life in the interior.

"I was blessed to be surrounded by family love, which instilled in me the value of always praying. Today, I am grateful for the blessings I have received through my prayers to God," said Rasuaki.

Education

Rasuaki's educational journey began at Nasau District School, where he attended classes from Year 1 - 6. Later, he moved to Rakiraki Muslim Primary for Year 7 and 8, setting the stage for his academic pursuits and he completed his studies up to Year 13 at Penang Sangam High School.

"While in high school, I decided to join Fiji National University because I aspired to become a teacher and

surrounded by children, as I see them as the custodians of the future. I believed that choosing FNU meant I would be trained by professionals," Rasuaki said.

The year 2021 marked a significant milestone as he graduated from the Fiji National University with a Bachelor of Education (Secondary), a proud accomplishment that paved the way for his future endeavours.

"It was a proud moment for me and my family when I graduated from the Fiji National University."

His time as a full-time TSLS sponsored student at Natabua Hostel, were dedicated to his studies, demonstrating a commitment to excellence. His thirst for knowledge led him to Suva in 2022, where he engaged in a course at the Pacific Theological College, delving into research work centred on social justice and leadership.

With a passion for education, Rasuaki is continuing his academic journey at FNU. He visited the FNU Rakiraki roadshow last week, where he proudly received his offer letter to pursue a Postgraduate Diploma in Education, specialising in Geography and History.

"I wanted to upgrade my studies because I believe there is no limit to learning. When I heard that the FNU Roadshow was in Rakiraki town, I decided to visit and obtain my offer letter instead of travelling to Suva. I thank the university for making it convenient for the people of Rakiraki by bringing the information-sharing event to our town and turning our dreams into reality."

Career

The turning point in Rasuaki's career came in 2023 when he secured a relieving post at Bukama Primary School. The experience served as a stepping stone, and today, he proudly holds a full-time teaching position at Nairai District School. Life on the island is serene, and everything is in its place, a testament to Rasuaki's dedication and hard work.

"I was blessed to be called to relieve a teacher who had gone on maternity leave. It was my first posting, and I was fortunate to learn all I could from my first relieving post in Bukama Primary School."

Critical to Rasuaki's journey has been the unwavering support of his life partner, Asenaca Ketedromo. A fellow Alumni of the Fiji National University, Ketedromo's educational pursuits took her to Australia under the care scheme. As she navigated new horizons, her support became a cornerstone for Rasuaki, reinforcing their shared commitment to personal and professional growth.

Rasuaki Returns to Further his Studies at FNU

Words of Wisdom

Through the highs and lows, Eva Rasuaki's story echoes a simple yet profound message – to be patient, as everything unfolds at the right time. His reliance on prayer, combined with persistent effort, has been the guiding force in shaping his remarkable journey from a small village in Ra to the classrooms of Nairai District School.

"Every single penny I received, I saved to help out my family as we were struggling. I learned the importance of saving every cent and spending my free time studying. The road to success is not easy, but if you use your struggles to motivate you, you will achieve what your mind and heart set out to accomplish."



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:** Ashlyn Vilash
Division Head: Director Marketing and Communications, Karen Lobendahn
Writers: Grace Waqawaqa, Christal Kapoor, Pravin Narain, Jennis Naidu, Nicolette Chambers, Fotagkauri Aisea
Contributors: Vice-Chancellor, Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, and Acting Pro-Vice Chancellor Learning & Teaching, Dr Jimaima Lako.

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

