



INSIDE FNU

BUILDING TOMORROW TOGETHER

From
Humble
Beginnings to
Bright Futures



Elizabeth Timaleti Matanivanua.

BY CHRISTAL KAPOOR

YOUNG and determined Qauia resident Elizabeth Timaleti Matanivanua, a trailblazing member of a seven-sibling family, is carving out a unique path at the Fiji National University (FNU). As the first in her family to pursue higher education, she is breaking new ground.

Her journey to FNU began in 2019 during a career expo at Dudley High School. The FNU team’s passionate presentation about the university’s diverse programs and affordability resonated deeply with her, setting the stage for her future.

“I was drawn to FNU because of its various programmes and cost-

effectiveness,” Matanivanua said. “It was the perfect fit for me and my family.”

Currently pursuing a Diploma in Information Technology (Level 5) from the College of Engineering and Technical Vocational Education and Training (CETVET), her unusual inspiration came from a character in the movie Iron Man who was seen “playing around with computers.”

This sparked a curiosity and passion for technology that she is now channelling into her studies. The road to academic success was not without its challenges.

Beginning her university journey amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, she faced

significant hardships, including financial difficulties and an unreliable power supply at home. However, she found support through friendships and overcame these obstacles.

“Some of my friends even helped me with labs, tutorials, and projects.”

Her time at FNU has been transformative. Initially an introvert, she has blossomed into an ambivert. Forming lasting friendships in her first year and graduating with a Certificate in Information Technology were highlights.

“My parents, siblings, and grandmother have been my biggest inspirations.”

Beyond academics, Matanivanua is involved in the Nasinu Christian Fellowship Group, a student organisation that has enriched her university experience. Balancing her studies with extracurricular activities, she emphasises the importance of time management.

“By completing assignments on time, I avoid stress and have time for fun,” she added.

“Come join FNU; it’s life-changing, affordable, and offers a fantastic student experience with free Wi-Fi and gym facilities.”



The Fiji National University continues to maintain its Ranking with further improvement in overall scores.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Health Professionals Education Symposium**
The College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences will host the Health Professionals Education Symposium on the 2-3 September at the Sofitel Resort, Nadi.
- **EU-RERIPA Stakeholder Workshop**
As FNU’s first-ever EU-research-funded project, spearheaded by Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Learning and Teaching, Dr Jimaima Lako, is a collaborative endeavour involving the Fiji National University (FNU) and a consortium of regional partners. The stakeholder workshop will be held on 3- 4 September.
- **National Conference on Information System**
The National Training and Productivity Centre’s National Conference on IT is scheduled from 26-27 September at the Pearl Resort in Pacific Harbour.

For feedback, suggestions and opinions, email Manager Public Relations and Communications, Ropate Robi on mprc@fnu.ac.fj

FNU Pledges Support for Government's Vision



FNU Chancellor, Mr Semesa Karavaki and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba welcoming Prime Minister, Honourable Sitiveni Rabuka at FNU.

BY CHRISTAL KAPOOR

THE Vice-Chancellor of the Fiji National University (FNU), Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba promised that the University will work in collaboration with the Coalition Government to ensure that the goals of the National Development Plan will be achieved. She shared this sentiment during the official visit of the Prime Minister of Fiji, Honourable Sitiveni Rabuka, to FNU’s Nasinu campus.

“We promise that FNU will move with you and carve a future in the Fijian Government’s vision. At FNU, we will focus on the Fijian Government’s manifesto and National Development Plan,” said the Professor Nabobo-Baba.

“FNU understands the horizon the government is taking, and FNU will take the same horizon.”

She further highlighted how FNU’s Strategic Plan 2024–2026, and long-term Vision 2037 reflect this commitment.

“These plans are designed to enhance learning, teaching, and research at FNU, with a focus on finding sustainable solutions for Fiji and the Pacific region,” highlighted Professor Nabobo-Baba.

“FNU’s Strategic Plan 2024–2026 is particularly significant, as it aims to transform both Fiji and FNU through education that fosters wisdom and sustainability.”

She added that when we build a national university, we ensure that everyone belongs, and that the institution delivers on the Government’s mandate.

Honourable Sitiveni Rabuka thanked the University for its warm hospitality and encouraged students and staff to not give up.

“You are an institution of learning; you are being taught by people who have gone through this process. There is always a path to recovery; do not give up, keep going, and graduate. FNU, thank you for your hospitality today,” he said.

The Prime Minister also stated that change is a natural process and that societies must evolve to ensure everyone feels included.

This joyous occasion concluded with a performance by the renowned FNU Natabua Campus Choir, and a meeting between the University’s Senior Leadership Team and the Prime Minister.

“We promise that FNU will move with you and carve a future in the Fijian Government's vision. At FNU, we will focus on the Fijian Government's manifesto and National Development Plan.”

FNU PULSE Rings in New Era of Telecommunication for FNU

BY CHRISTAL KAPOOR

KEEPING up with the dynamic era of telecommunication, the Fiji National University (FNU) recently launched its video podcast, FNUPULSE.

FNUPULSE exemplifies FNU’s proactive approach to harnessing technology for the betterment of society.

FNU Director of Marketing and Communications, Karen Lobendahn said that listeners can expect riveting discussions, thought-provoking interviews, and insightful analyses on a diverse range of topics, including education, technology, culture, and socio-economic issues.

“FNUPULSE hopes to share knowledge and inspiration, foster healthy dialogue, and drive positive change in Fiji and beyond,” Lobendahn said.

“FNUPULSE represents a pivotal moment for FNU and embodies our dedication to excellence in education and community engagement. Through this innovative podcast, we aim to amplify our impact by reaching audiences far and wide, enriching lives, and driving sustainable development.”

She added that this dynamic platform aims to revolutionise knowledge dissemination by providing insightful discussions on the FNU’s programmes, significant events, and topics of national and regional interest.

“FNUPULSE also demonstrates FNU’s commitment to innovation and societal development, aligning seamlessly with our institution’s Strategic Plan Priority Area 3: Research, Innovation, Social, and Technological Development,” Lobendahn added.

“With FNUPULSE, FNU endeavours to transcend geographical boundaries, offering invaluable information about Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Higher Education. This initiative is poised to empower not only individuals but also entire communities across the Pacific, fostering a culture of lifelong learning and advancement.”

FNUPULSE can be accessed on the Fiji National University Facebook page as well as on the University’s YouTube channel.



Fiji National University Assistant Lecturer, Milika Ligabalavu and Senior Public Relations & Communications Specialist, Christal Kapoor.



Paulina Naerecoko.

BY NICOLETTE CHAMBERS

BALANCING the demands of single motherhood with her studies at the Fiji National University’s Namaka Campus, Paulina Naerecoko faced immense challenges. For six months, she sacrificed precious time to attend classes at least twice a week, leaving her children behind.

Naerecoko, a single parent of two, achieved a significant milestone by graduating from the FNU’s National Training and Productivity Centre’s Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Travel in the Semester 1, 2024 ceremony.

One of 57 graduates, Naerecoko celebrated

The 49-year-old from Tau Village in Nadroga also works as a Housekeeping Assistant at the Fiji Marriott Resort Momi Bay, a position she has held for three years.

It was not an easy journey, but determination and hard work got her through.

Naerecoko took on the challenge of playing the role of mother and father to her two children, traveling to work daily to provide for her family, traveling from Nadroga to Nadi two days in a week for her classes.

“Working and studying was a challenge for me because the two days that I used to

her accomplishment after attaining an Educational Quality and Assessment Programme (EQAP) accredited Microqualifications Certificate in ‘Deliver Housekeeping and Accommodation Services’.

travel down to Nadi for my classes are actually time for me to spend with my two children,” she said.

“My children are my biggest support, and I dedicate my achievements to them.”

The department’s Head of Training, Sheileshni Nair, shared that education was a lifelong process that never stopped.

“Our subject instructors have put their

hearts and souls into ensuring that you are well-prepared and competent in your respective disciplines,” said Nair.

“Graduates, as you venture into the world, carry with you the lessons you have learnt and the skills that you have acquired. The future is bright, and I have no doubt that you will make remarkable contributions to the fields of tourism, hospitality, and travel.”

“

Working and studying was a challenge for me because the two days that I used to travel down to Nadi for my classes are actually time for me to spend with my two children

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BY GRACE WAQAWAQA



RUPENI Taga, a humble individual from Votua village in Lekutu, Bua, is making a significant impact on his community.

As a Diploma in Management student at the Fiji National University (FNU) and the President of the Lekutu Centre Student Association, Taga is not only pursuing his own dreams but also inspiring others to do the same.

Thanks to collaborative efforts between FNU, Votua village, and Fiji Pine Ltd, Taga and his fellow Lekutu and Bua residents now have the opportunity to pursue higher education right at their doorstep.

“With the support from FNU and Fiji Pine Ltd, pursuing tertiary qualifications is not just a dream; it is a reality. Higher education is within our reach,” Taga said.

“This initiative was created specifically for us,

the youths of Lekutu and Bua. With our abundant local resources, we are eager to apply what we learn to positively impact our community. There is no need to leave our homes to pursue education; we can study here and develop our community from the ground up.”

Under the guidance of Assistant Lecturer, Kinijioti Vakawaletabua, a fellow Lekutu

local, the students are able to attend all lectures, tutorials and submit their coursework on time, despite the limited resources.

“Having a fellow Lekutu local as our teacher is a tremendous advantage. Mr Vakawaletabua does not just educate us; he empowers and inspires us. We see in him the possibility of achieving greatness and are motivated to follow in his footsteps,” added Taga.

Taga’s passion for education and community development is evident in his leadership role within the student association. He has been instrumental in organising various community initiatives with the students, including the ‘Good Samaritan’ project, which involves clean-up campaigns, community work, and encouraging youths to pursue their goals.

“While we are giving back, we are also doing a bit of marketing of the Centre’s programmes and inspiring other youths to seize the opportunities available to them,” he said.

Taga’s aspirations extend beyond his current studies. Inspired by Mr Vakawaletabua, he plans to pursue further education, including a Master’s degree, and one day teach at FNU.

His commitment to community engagement was also showcased at the Bua Youth Festival, where he represented his village and district at the provincial event with the aim of inspiring Bua youths to reach for their dreams.

Ligabalavu transforms a group of law students into formidable legal warriors

BY PRAVIN NARAIN

MILIKA Ligabalavu traded the gavel for the guidance counsellor’s role, and the move paid off in spades.

A lawyer by profession and an assistant lecturer at Fiji National University, Ligabalavu transformed a group of law students into formidable legal warriors.

Ligabalavu attributes Fiji National University’s win to teamwork and dedication

“My father is from from Korolevu, Navosa, and my mother is from Central Province in Papua New Guinea,” she shared.

“Being a lawyer is my second career. I was previously an Immigration Officer for a foreign government based in Suva.

“My legal career began in 2019 after my admission to the Bar at the High Court of Fiji in January 2019. I started in private practice and then moved on to join a non-governmental organisation, the Citizens’ Constitutional Forum (CCF), where I held the role of Policy and Research Officer.”

Ligabalavu who is currently pursuing Masters in Law and a Postgraduate Diploma in Social Policy this semester



Milika Ligabalavu.

at FNU, is a people-centered person with a heart for helping others reach their potential.

“I am the eldest of three siblings in the family, and I have a younger sister and brother. Both my parents are retired High School teachers,” she shared.

“I am driven by two things in life: the desire to help people and to learn new things in order to develop myself personally.”

She described the inter-tertiary moot competition as a tough contest between FNU, the University of Fiji, and the University of the South Pacific after she was chosen to lead the FNU team as the Moot Coordinator.

Her coaching prowess culminated in a historic moot competition victory, marking the university’s win at an inter-tertiary moot court competition. The competition’s finals were presided over by three esteemed High Court judges.

“The Head of the Department of Law, Assistant Professor Ana Rokomokoti, provided the necessary support to the team throughout their competition journey.

“The team members worked together tirelessly to prepare submissions and meet competition deadlines of 24 hours and 48 hours. They dedicated many long hours together to analysing the competition questions, researching relevant laws and cases, drafting their submissions, and practicing their advocacy skills.

FNU Lekutu Centre: A Catalyst for Community Development



Tui Bua, FNU’s CETVET Lecturer, Ms Sebiuta Utoni and Assistant Minister for Itaukei Affairs, Ratu Isireli Vesikula at Bua College.

BY GRACE WAQAWAQA

THE Lekutu Centre, a Fiji National University (FNU) satellite centre, exemplifies education’s transformative power in rural Fiji. Nestled in Votua village within the Lekutu district in Bua province, Vanua Levu, this community centre has become a hub for learning, growth, and empowerment for students and locals alike.

By bringing education closer to home, FNU’s Lekutu Centre has bridged the gap between traditional educational practices and the evolving needs of remote communities. This eliminates the challenges faced by rural students, who often must travel to Labasa or Viti Levu for their studies, leaving their villages and relying on distant relatives for support.

Ratu Kinijioti Vakawaletabua, an Assistant Lecturer at the Lekutu Centre, emphasises that tailoring educational programmes to the specific needs of the community is crucial.

“By understanding the local context, FNU, through the Centre was able to offer courses that are relevant and impactful, empowering students to contribute meaningfully to their communities.”

Established in Semester 1 of 2024 following needs-based assessments, the Centre offers four Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes from

the College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies (CBHTS) and the College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF). The programmes include Diploma in Management (Level 6), Diploma in Office Administration (Level 5), Certificate in Agriculture (Level 3), and Certificate in Cookery (Level 3). Currently, the Centre hosts a total of 42 students from Lekutu district and surrounding areas.

FNU’s commitment to community-based learning has yielded remarkable results. Students at the Centre actively participate in local groups and committees, implementing valuable knowledge gained in organisation, documentation, event planning, and catering. Agriculture and cookery students have even collaborated to establish a farm, selling their produce and generating income for themselves and their families.

Vakawaletabua also highlighted the Centre’s role in empowering rural women.

“Majority of the students at the Centre are female, and through their studies, they are gaining the skills and confidence to pursue careers beyond traditional domestic roles.”

“One of our cookery students has started a small business selling homemade pastries at the village canteen, providing a sustainable income for herself and her family.”

“Not only are they excelling academically, but they are also seizing the opportunity to challenge traditional gender roles, particularly within the rural I-taukei context, where married women often face limited opportunities beyond domestic life.”

The Lekutu Centre’s impact extends beyond the classroom. It has become a catalyst for positive change within the Votua community. Villagers, including the leaders, have witnessed a decrease in noise and an increase in orderliness since the Centre’s establishment. The students of the Centre actively contribute to the community by organising cleanup campaigns in the village and surrounding areas.

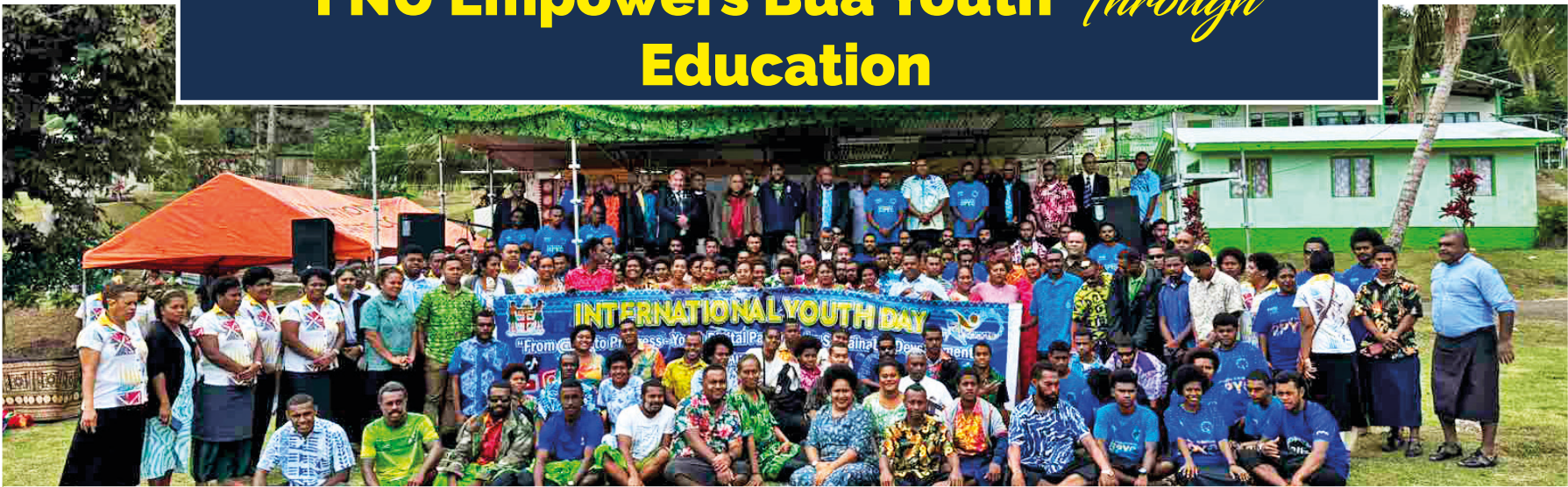
While the Centre faces challenges such as limited resources, it remains dedicated to providing quality education to its students. Through strategic planning and collaboration with the Naduna campus, the Centre has been able to overcome obstacles and ensure that students receive the necessary support, particularly during coursework deadlines and exam periods.

“We have been working strategically around this issue; for example, last semester, we organised a weeklong visit to Labasa, where students had one-on-one sessions with lecturers to ensure timely preparation for exams and submission of their work,” said Vakawaletabua.

To further accommodate students’ needs, the Centre remains open from 6pm to 8pm on weekdays and until midday on Saturdays and facilitates Zoom classes for remote students. This flexibility allows students to catch up on work or study at their own pace.

With plans to expand its programme offerings and improve its facilities, the FNU Lekutu Centre is poised to become an even more vital asset to the Bua province.

FNU Empowers Bua Youth Through Education



Youth represenatives from the Cakaudrove, Bua and Macuata provinces at the commemoration of the International Youth Day 2024 and the opening of the Bua Youth Festival.

BY GRACE WAQAWAQA

THE Fiji National University (FNU) has made a significant impact at the week-long Bua Youth Festival, inspiring and empowering young people to pursue higher education as a pathway to addressing the province’s development challenges.

The festival, a gathering of hundreds of youths from nine districts and 52 villages in Bua Province, provided a platform for FNU to engage with potential students, current students, and parents, offering academic counselling and information about the University’s diverse range of programmes.

Overwhelmingly, attendees expressed interest in programmes closer to home, highlighting the need for accessible education within the community.

FNU’s presence at the festival aligns with its commitment to providing inclusive and equitable education opportunities for all Fijians.

Ratu Kinijioti Vakawaletabua, Vice President of the Bua Provincial Youth Council, emphasised the importance of education in addressing the province’s pressing issues of early school dropouts and poverty.

“This is a crucial event for our youth to come together, share ideas, and be inspired,” said Vakawaletabua.

“We are grateful for FNU’s commitment to supporting our young people and addressing the challenges faced by our province.”

In a positive development, FNU was part of discussions to explore the possibility of relocating the Lekutu Centre to Bua College for improved accessibility.

Naduna campus Engineering Lecturer Ms Sebiuta Utoni, who participated in a recent visit to the college with stakeholders, expressed optimism about the potential benefits of this move.

“Relocating the Lekutu Centre to Bua College could significantly enhance access to higher education for the people of Bua,” said Ms Utoni.

“We are excited about the prospect of bringing FNU closer to the community and supporting the development of the province.”

FNU remains committed to working closely with the Bua Provincial Council and other stakeholders to create opportunities for young people and contribute to the overall development of the region.

What is Research and Why is it Important?

“ So, why is research important? Research has done so much for humanity that it is unthinkable if we would be in existence without it. ”

BY PROFESSOR PAUL IJI

I AM compelled to write this narrative about the very first seminar that I presented to the College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF) after my appointment as Dean. It was a kind of follow-up to the commencement of postgraduate training at CAFF, the last college to introduce training beyond Level 7. There was a need to introduce the concept of research in its simplest form, including what it means, why research is done, who does research, and how research is done. I believe that the seminar had a positive impact on CAFF, as can be seen by the growth of research that has followed in the past 3–4 years.

So, what is research? We all do research in our day-to-day lives, sometimes without realising it. The central key to research is comparison between things. For example, we constantly compare the prices of the same products between shops; we compare the quality of food between restaurants; we compare airfares; and so on. However, these general comparisons may not constitute scientific research. I use “scientific” here loosely to denote its general meaning as “knowledge.”

Scientific research has rules. Firstly, it must be done in a systematic (orderly) manner, exclude bias, and generally include more than one item per group that is being compared with another group or groups. In research terminology, a group must have replicates. We cannot compare one car of brand A with another car of brand B and call that scientific research. There are more complex rules that I would want to avoid here, for example, the need for normal distribution or similarity between replicates.

The simplest definition of research that I have heard was from one of my former statistics lecturers, who presented the word as a combination of two words: repeat and

search. In this very simple definition, research tends to involve repeated searches until we get an answer or a better understanding of something. Several researchers or groups will test the assumptions or hypotheses until the answers are repeatable. And repeatability is another measure of good research. We expect to obtain the same results again and again if the same procedures are applied in the conduct of research.

So, why is research important? Research has done so much for humanity that it is unthinkable if we would be in existence without it. Everyone recently saw how a simple virus held the world down for close to three years. Across the world, researchers went to work to find a vaccine, and it took many months before some light was visible at the end of the tunnel. So much effort was put into developing an effective vaccine against COVID-19 because it had the potential to quickly wipe out the human population and some animals due to its mode of transmission, through the air. Nearly a century ago, bacterial infections were difficult, if not impossible, to treat until Alexander Fleming discovered Penicillin. A lot of research has gone into developing synthetic versions of this medicine and thousands of other antibiotics that keep the world safe now.

I have used medical examples because they are of life and death in nature. Researchers have developed high-producing and disease-resistant crops and animals to ensure food security; researchers have developed an effective education system for countries; developed skills and technology for businesses; and developed power and water supplies to ease life on earth. Lawyers research past legal decisions to guide their practice. Most of these examples are what we call research with real-world impact.

They tend to yield immediate, applicable results. Other types of research may take some time to generate usable outcomes.

FNU has deliberately chosen to focus on research with a real-world impact because Fiji and the rest of the South Pacific region face challenges that hamper development. The region faces the existential challenge of climate change. How do we address the challenges of climate change if we do not conduct research? Climate change is creating new pathogens, eroding lands that are required for habitation and agriculture, causing very destructive winds, increasing soil salinity, which prevents crop production, raising sea temperatures that are detrimental to aquatic life, and so much more. While we cannot stop some of these effects, we can develop mechanisms for resilience or adaptation to the impact of the changes. This comes through research.

Another major challenge is the increasing rate of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The medical intervention for NCDs is mostly drug-based and has progressed along the lines of research into the development of more effective medications. However, there are complementary non-medical research efforts to combat NCDs, and this is where other disciplines come into the picture. Nutrition plays an important factor; we need to research into what nutrients and diets would be most effective in reducing the development of NCDs; what exercise regimes would reduce obesity, and thus, NCD; and more.

A huge number of books can be written on the benefits of research, and for the region, there is a long way to go as far as research is concerned. What legal system would be best for the country? How can we improve small and microbusinesses? How can we improve the delivery of education with greater benefit

to the community? How can we sustain the culture, traditions, and languages of the region? The research questions are endless.

Should we still answer the question of whether FNU should do research? The simple answer is yes. Firstly, we would not be classified as a university if we did not conduct research. Such institutions are called “colleges” in America. But it is not a matter of status. As a national university, we should develop evidence-based or research-based policies for the country, deliver theory, and most importantly, conduct research into the challenges confronting the country and the region. The final part of our research contribution should be extension, which has to do with reaching the community with our findings and knowledge. This community extends from our doorstep to the village and on to the high-tech world of modern communication, pharmacology, energy supply, tourism, hospitality, and everything that improves the quality of life.

Finally, who does research? I have answered this question in a few presentations to the FNU community already. Research is for everybody, not just those with postgraduate qualifications. While a postgraduate qualification would help with understanding the process, some professional areas are hands-on, and their research output may be in the form of a patentable product rather than publications.

I hope that this provides some basic understanding of research to guide our faculty, our governance arm, and the broader community. In a future article, I will present our research achievements at FNU over the relatively short period of time that we have operated as a university.

• **Professor Paul Iji is the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation at the Fiji National University.**



Professor Paul Iji.



Imtiaz Khan.

NTPC plays vital *role* in Fiji's skilled workforce development

BY JENNIS NAIDU

THE Fiji National University's National Training and Productivity Centre's (NTPC) National Trade Testing Scheme plays a vital role in Fiji's skilled workforce development.

Th scheme provides a pathway to formal trade qualifications, the programme empowers individuals to achieve their professional goals and contribute to economic growth.

Imtiaz Khan, a Service Technician at FNU, is a shining example of how this programme empowers skilled tradespeople to achieve formal recognition and career advancement.

Khan, who has extensive experience in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning (RAC), decided to pursue trade testing after years of working in the field.

"My goal was to be officially recognised as an assistant tradesperson and eventually a qualified tradesperson," Khan said.

He took the initiative and successfully completed both Level III and Level II trade tests in Refrigeration & Air Conditioning in 2012 and 2013 at the NTPC.

Khan's career reflects the value of trade testing, from starting as an attaché in the RAC field in 2004, he gained valuable experience across various organisations.

Today, he is a Service Technician at FNU, where his trade test certifications are recognised and valued.

Khan strongly encourages others in the trades to consider taking the National Trade Testing Scheme.

"It's a fantastic opportunity to obtain recognised certification.

"The tests assess both theoretical knowledge and practical skills you've acquired throughout your career. I highly recommend it to anyone who wants to validate their expertise and take their career to the next level."

“

"The tests assess both theoretical knowledge and practical skills you've acquired throughout your career."

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Discover Your *Future* at FNU 2024 Open Day

BY JENNIS NAIDU

THE Fiji National University (FNU) will host the 2024 Open Day at five of its campuses from October 3-5, 2024.

FNU Vice-Chancellor, Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, expresses her enthusiasm for welcoming the students and the community to the University's campuses.

"The 2024 FNU Open Day is a fantastic opportunity for us to showcase our exceptional facilities, programmes, and dedicated staff," she said.

"Prospective students will have the chance to gain valuable insights into their chosen fields of study, meet with academic team, and experience campus life first hand."

"We encourage everyone to take advantage of this opportunity to explore educational pathways and discover how

FNU can help you achieve their goals."

Prospective students and the members of the public are invited to explore the University's campuses and discover the diverse range of programmes and courses offered by Fiji's national university.

The 2024 Open Day activities will be held across four of FNU's main campuses:

- **Naduna Campus:** Thursday, 3 October 2024 (8.00 am – 4.00pm)
- **Naduna, Natabua, Namaka, and Nasinu Campuses:** Friday, 4 October 2024 (8.00 am – 4.00pm)
- **Nasinu Campus:** Saturday, 5 October 2024 (9.00am – 3.00pm)

The 2024 FNU Open Day will feature informative sessions, college exhibits, campus tours, and interactive activities designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the University's offerings.



Students at the 2023 FNU Open Day.

FNU *hosted* students from the University of Technology Sydney



FNU hosted students from the University of Technology Sydney.

BY PRAVIN NARAIN

STUDENTS from the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) in Australia explored the principles of Child Health Nursing, Mental Health Nursing and Community Nursing in Fiji.

This was part of UTS’ New Columbo Plan Student Mobility funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The 28 students who were part of the programme had a strong community nursing and public health focus with exposure to planetary health in practice.

UTS Associate Professor, Jane Frawley, said the students were excited to learn about the Fijian health system.

“Nursing and Public Health are incredibly noble and

humbling professions. I believe our students, as well as the FNU students, have chosen nursing as a profession because they want to help their communities,” Frawley said. “We are here to learn from FNU academic staff and students; we will also visit villages and settlements and observe the differences between the health sectors in Australia, Fiji, and the Pacific.”

Student Kirsten Iris Bermudez said the trip had really opened her eyes to what public health really is and has unlocked her passion for her studies in public health altogether.

“This trip really was a once in a lifetime trip and I’m

incredibly glad I went on it and that I was able to meet the FNU staff and students. Being quite connected to my own Filipino heritage and culture I have grown up with a familiarity to community- but honestly nothing can compare at all to the sense of love and community I had experienced in Fiji whether that have been at FNU or in the villages. It really was such a privilege to be a part of this,” Bermudez said.

UTS and FNU via their respective School of Nursing now have a three-year Memorandum of Understanding that would allow students and staff to engage more in capacity building and academic programme alignments.

CMNHS Dental Clinic Offers Training and *Community* Care

BY PRAVIN NARAIN

THE Fiji National University’s College of Medicine, Nursing, and Health Sciences (CMNHS) operates a dental clinic dedicated to providing oral health services to the community while offering comprehensive training to dental students.

Dr Anumala Ram, Assistant Professor in Periodontics at the School of Dentistry and Oral Health and Head of Department for Clinical Operations, stated that the clinic serves as a platform for students to acquire in-depth knowledge and translate to clinical skills across various aspects of dental science, including anatomy, physiology, pathology, and clinical procedures.

“Students gain invaluable experience through exposure to a wide range of oral health conditions and their management,” Dr Ram said.

“The clinic serves a dual purpose. It offers paid dental services to the public, staffed by general and specialist dentists, while simultaneously providing a learning environment for dental students, who offer free treatment under faculty guidance.

“Initial training involves the use of dental manikins to develop fundamental skills. Subsequently, students’ progress to treating real patients, gaining essential clinical competence and confidence.

“Our services encompass preventive care, periodontal therapy, restorative treatments, prosthetics, root canal treatment, diagnostic procedures, oral surgery, and orthodontics,” Dr Ram explained.

“By providing free dental care to students, we aim to improve access to oral healthcare, particularly for those in underserved communities.”

Dr Ram emphasised the clinic’s commitment to preventive care and community outreach.

“Patient education on oral hygiene is a cornerstone of our approach, aiming to reduce the prevalence of dental problems. Additionally, our outreach programmes extend oral healthcare and education beyond the clinic, reaching schools and community centres.”

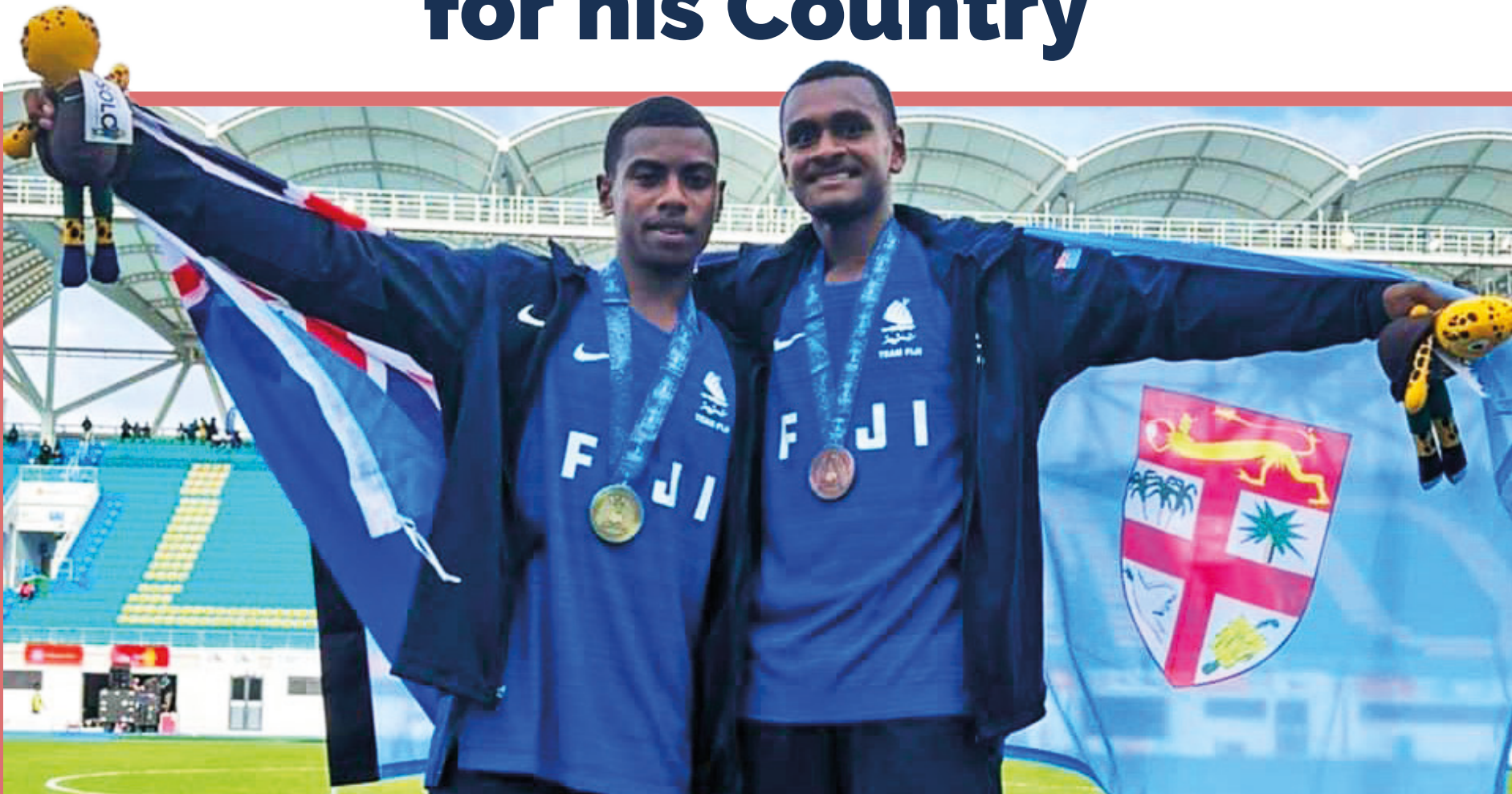


University

CMNHS operates a dental clinic.

Health & Hustle

Tabaiwalu's Love *and* passion for his Country



Lorima Tabaiwalu (*right*) following the 2023 Pacific Games.

BY NICOLETTE CHAMBERS

AS a young boy, Lorima Tabaiwalu Nasiganilewa was captivated by the sight of Fijian athletes on international stages displayed on his television.

The Nadroga native from Votua Village with maternal links to the village of Nahigatoka, had a dream—a burning desire to don the national colours and represent his country with pride.

“Watching people represent Fiji ignited a passion within me,” he recalled. “As a child, I vowed to one day follow in their footsteps.”

Tabaiwalu's dream began to take shape in 2019 when he was selected to compete in the High Jump at the annual Coca-Cola Games, representing his school, Nasikawa Vision College. He soared to victory, winning a bronze medal. His journey continued at Sigatoka Methodist College last year, where he secured a bronze medal also in the same event.

Tabaiwalu's achievements extend beyond the classroom. He represented Fiji at the Pacific Games after winning a bronze medal last year and competed again this year at the Oceania Games.

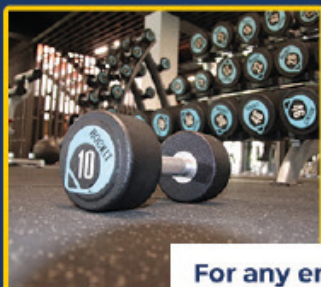
Today, Tabaiwalu's star continues to shine brightly. He represents Fiji with distinction, proudly wearing the national colours and the emblem of Fiji National University (FNU). The 20-year-old is a first-year student pursuing a Bachelor of Education (Secondary) in English and iTaukei at FNU's Natabua Campus in Lautoka.

“As a young person, I always put God first in everything I do, and everything falls into its perfect place,” he added.

“My advice to the younger generation is to always have a pinch of self-discipline and loads of trust in God.”



FIJI NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY



FNU Gym Opening Hours

Monday to Friday, 5am to 9pm
Saturday, 6am to 6pm
Sunday, 6am to 2pm
Public Holiday, 6am to 2pm

Multi-Purpose Court Operating Hours

Monday to Thursday, 5am to 9pm
Friday, 5am to 10pm
Saturday, 6am to 10pm
Sunday, 6am to 6pm
Public Holiday, 6am to 6pm

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or visit the link: <https://courtreservation.fnu.ac.fj/booking-form/>

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Design & Layout: Luke Salababa

Division Head: Director Marketing and Communications, Karen Lobendahn

Writers: Jennis Naidu, Pravin Narain, Nicolette Chambers, Grace Waqawaqa, Christal Kapoor

Contributor: Professor Paul Iji

INSIDE FNU wants to HEAR FROM YOU

INSIDE FNU 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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