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PRESS RELEASE

Graduates challenged to foster national development

Suva, Fiji Islands. The graduates of College of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF) and the National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) have been challenged to take up opportunities in Fiji and contribute to the development of this country.

The Minister of Employment, Productivity & Industrial Relations, Honourable Jone Usamate made these comments while speaking at the CAFF and NTPC graduation at Novotel Entertainment Centre, Lami.

“I want to see a growth in young graduates taking up trade areas and even exploring youth entrepreneurship,” said Hon Usamate.

“Unemployment is a major challenge of our time. Here in Fiji, unemployment is now down to 5.5 percent, which is the lowest it has been in 15 years. A significant portion of our workforce is engaged in informal work or in subsistence economy.”

The Minister urged tertiary providers to be innovative and find ways to ensure they are producing the right kind of graduates that the industries need.

“Be prepared to look ahead and to forecast future competency profiles and develop programmes and systems that meet those needs.”

He also urged the tertiary institutions to work constantly with the Higher Education Commission to ensure that they deliver the right kind of skilled workers in this country.

One hundred thirty-two students graduated from CAFF in 11 different programmes.

Hon Usamate urged the graduates of CAFF to make a significant contribution to agricultural advancement in the country particularly in areas of research.

“Fiji needs huge improvement in agricultural productivity. Fiji needs you to be part of that effort to improve agricultural productivity, whether it is a farmer, a researcher or a bureaucrat,” said the Minister.

“We need more commercial farmers. We need consistency of supply and consistency of quality in all our agricultural, fisheries and forestry products. You are called upon to be part of that.”

The lone graduate of Trade Diploma in Wood Processing and Value Adding, Tomasi Lia was overwhelmed to have finally achieved his dream.

“My particular interest of how wastage can be minimised in the wood processing industry led me to pursue this career. I am looking forward to joining the workforce and applying the skills that I have learnt from CAFF.”

Lia’s father, Mr Paula Tikoicina said “it is all because of my son’s sacrifices and hard work that I am a very proud father today.”

One hundred forty-seven students graduated from NTPC. Four students graduated with National Safety Council of Australia certificates, 15 students with Australian Institute of Management certificates and 128 students with TAFE NSW certificates.

Hon Usamate appaluded the recent introduction of new programmes by NTPC such as Diploma of Project Management from Australia Institute of Management and Diploma of Human Resource Management from TAFE NSW.

“I also commend NTPC for the continuous capital development projects undertaken to meet international standards in terms of training facilities. Effective training requires the right kind of teaching environment, the right quality of teachers and the right facilities and equipment,” said Hon Usamate.

This year marks 19 years of strategic partnership between NTPC and TAFE. This partnership enables NTPC to offer specific industry programmes which are skilled based and relevant. Also, the programmes allow for stringent quality assurance process leading to compliance and quality.

Meanwhile, sleepless nights to keep up with the University studies finally paid off for Filimoni Lolovo Nawara as he received the Statement of Excellence in Diploma of Information Technology (Networking) award.

Tears flowed as the Ra lad explained his excitement to have finally achieved a qualification in his dream career.

“Networking has always been my passion. As I look back in at my university life, I do not regret the sacrifices I had to make in order to achieve my dream qualification.”

Other College graduation ceremonies are follows:


GRADUATION CEREMONIES


of **COLLEGE OF MEDICINE, NURSING and HEALTH SCIENCES [CMNHS]**

to be held on **Tuesday 12 December, 2017** from **9am** at the **Vodafone Arena** [Session1], **Laucala Bay, Suva.**

and **COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, SCIENCE and TECHNOLOGY [CEST]**

to be held on **Tuesday 12 December, 2017** from **2pm** at the **Vodafone Arena** [Session 2], **Laucala Bay, Suva.**

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, HOSPITALITY and TOURISM STUDIES [CBHTS]

to be held on **Wednesday 13 December, 2017** from **9am** at the **Vodafone Arena** [Session1], **Laucala Bay, Suva.**

and **COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES and EDUCATION [CHE]**

to be held on **Wednesday 13 December, 2017** from **9am** at the **Vodafone Arena** [Session 2], **Laucala Bay, Suva.**

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About the Fiji National University: The Fiji National University (FNU) was established through the merger of 7 government-owned tertiary institutions in Fiji, and commenced operations from 1 January 2010. The constituent institutions are found at over 40 different locations across Fiji, and collectively offer Certificates, Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, Degrees, Postgraduate qualifications and Skills Upgrading for those who are already in employment. Approximately 30,000 students pass through the University each year. Over the last six years of its operations, the University has registered major achievements with regard to new programme delivery, quality improvements and contribution to research and publications via its 5 Colleges: The College of Humanities & Education (CHE), the College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences (CMNHS), the College of Engineering, Science & Technology (CEST), the College of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry (CAFF), the College of Business, Hospitality & Tourism Studies (CBHTS) and the National Training & Productivity Centre (NTPC).