

Fiji National University (FNU) Law team wins human rights moot court competition

The Fiji National University (FNU) students law team has been crowned as the new champions of the annual Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF) moot court competition which was held at the High Court in Suva on Friday afternoon.

The three-member FNU Law team beat arch-rivals University of the South Pacific (USP) to claim the title for the second time in three years.

FNU team member Mili Tamani also scooped the 'Best Mooter' award. Tamani was awarded the award alongside a USP counterpart.

The FNU team comprised of Tamani, Unal Dev and Ana Waqatabu, all of whom are pursuing law studies at FNU's College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies (CBHTS).

The moot competition topic was on Torture and Freedom of Expression.

"For our team, this win is special. Winning the moot court competition for the second time shows the potential we have as FNU Law students and I believe this also shows the standard of what we are being taught as students," said Tamani.

"Personally, I'm grateful for this moot court competition as I have grown more appreciative of the fight for human rights. Pursuing Law studies at FNU have refined my abilities, sharpened my skills and provided me the chance to pit myself against formidable opponents and come out a winner."

Fellow team member Dev, 23, said the competition provided him a platform to showcase his public speaking and advocacy skills. He said team work was important and the team members needed to remain focused and composed throughout the competition.

Dev was victim to a robbery on the eve of the competition, where he lost his laptop which contained study materials.



*The winning FNU Law student moot court competition team.
From left; Mili Tamani, Unal Dev and Ana Waqatabu.*

"I still didn't lose hope and kept pushing till the end. This win is truly rewarding and will assist us when we start working in the legal field," Dev said.

Waqatabu, 29, said the win was a testament to the hard work, late nights, preparation done by the team and the assistance rendered by their lecturers during the past few weeks.

"We appreciate the support of our family, friends, and lecturers Ardarshani Vikash and Joeli Ditoka as well as our Head of Law Ana Rokomokoti," said Waqatabu.

FNU Head of Department – Law Ana Rokomokoti said the win highlighted the potential of FNU Law students and also reflected the work of law lecturers.

"These moot competitions are really opportunities for our students to learn, grow and appreciate each other's strength and weaknesses and to learn to work together as a team whilst in the process of preparing," Rokomokoti said.

"Also, presenting before a judge in the Court of Appeal is not always easy and can be nerve wrecking and but the key to this is preparations, understanding the facts of your case, grasping the legal issues and formulating arguments and propositions that is supported by statutory law and case law."

"Moot tests your ability to be quick, to think on your feet and have the ability to foresee and possible arguments that may arise and to counter them with plausible and workable legal arguments."

"We will enjoy it for now and look forward to other moot competitions when they arise. And congratulations to USP for giving us good competition."

The team received certificates and a trophy as winners of the competition whilst Tamani received a plaque for the 'Best Mooter' award.



*The winning FNU Law team. From right: Mili Tamani, Unal Dev and Ana Waqatabu.
Picture: Citizens' Constitutional Forum (CCF)*