

17 January, 2018

PRESS RELEASE

Rainima woos YES panel

Suva, Fiji Islands. A Fiji National University (FNU) student's dream and passion to pursue entrepreneurship and provide job opportunities to youths in the greater Tailevu area is set to become a reality thanks to the Fijian Government.

Atunaisa Rainima, AutoCAD student at FNU's National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC), was among the five entrepreneurs who had their applications pre-approved for the Young Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES) launched by the Hon Prime Minister, Mr Voreqe Bainimarama at Grand Pacific Hotel, Suva last Thursday.

Rainima plans to start a lawn and landscaping services business that will also convert garden refuse into cooking gas.

The 23 year-old, who is inspired by his maternal and paternal grandfathers, submitted a very convincing plan highlighting environmental friendly business setup.

"I came up with this idea from the processes used by my grandfathers. Both of them used to cut grass. They collected grass and produced biogas through a series of processes, whenever there was a shortage of gas," said Rainima.

"Cutting grass for people is the only source of income for my grandfathers and it is really exciting for me to witness how the elders make use of the available resources to go by their everyday lives. Now, it is upon us youths to make big from these small ideas."

"Through this business, I hope to provide employment opportunities to the youths of my village. I believe through this scheme, I will be able to improve the lives of the people back in my village," Rainima added.

His project is divided in three stages. The first step is to cut the grass, followed by collection of grass and the final step is to produce biogas.

Currently employed by the Ministry of Education, Rainima hopes to finish tertiary education and commence his business this year.

The recipients of YES have begun the program of mentorship through the YES initiative which will continue over the month.

Hon Bainimarama said after the mentorship program, the recipients will be eligible to receive grant funding of up to \$20,000 to pursue their business ideas.

“These young people have been selected by the YES judging panel after demonstrating that they not only have great business ideas, but that they have a game plan to turn those ideas into profitable businesses,” said the Prime Minister.

“We want our young people to do more than sit at the same desks in the same offices that we use today. Our youth should not only be job seekers, but they also need to be job creators that provide their fellow Fijians with new and exciting opportunities.”

“We want our young people to think outside the box, and make Fiji a hub of innovation for the Pacific, and the world. We want them to be leaders in business, civil society and government, putting their ideas at the forefront of Fiji’s development, with their entrepreneurial spirit carrying our nation into the future.”

“That is what the YES initiative is all about. At the heart of this program is a profound belief in the unique perspective brought by young Fijians and in their understanding of what our marketplace needs, both now and in the years ahead. It is about giving life to the ideas of smart and ambitious young people and to shake up Fijian society with their dreams for what is possible,” Hon Bainimarama added.

For further information, please contact Kalpana Kaajal on Email: kalpana.kaajal@fnu.ac.fj or Phone: 3394000 ext. 2886

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).