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Press Release

FNU opens newly renovated high-tech teaching Dental Clinic

Suva, Fiji Islands. The Fiji National University achieved yet another significant milestone in terms of capital infrastructure development by opening the newly renovated \$3.7m teaching Dental Clinic at FNU's Pasifika Campus.

The 'Tuisuva Dental Teaching Clinic' is named after Dr Jonacani Tuisuva, who has been instrumental in training and promotion of oral health services in Fiji and the region.

While speaking at the opening ceremony this morning, FNU Vice Chancellor, Professor Nigel Healey acknowledged Dr Tuisuva for giving the University the opportunity to honour his contributions by naming the facility after him.

"Dr Tuisuva was the former Head of School of Oral Health at then Fiji School of Medicine (FSM), which is now known as the College of Medicine, nursing and Health Sciences. He was actively involved in the review of the dental programme to meet the current needs in the Pacific region," said Professor Healey.

"Under his leadership, the Bachelor of Dental Surgery programme was introduced with the first cohort enrolling in 1993."

Professor Healey said the state-of-the-art dental clinic is the biggest dental teaching clinic in the Pacific region and the University acknowledges the Fijian Government for supporting this project.

"Students in Fiji and around the region will now get the opportunity to train at a facility which is on par with the Australia and New Zealand standards," said the VC.

"In the 2017-2018 Budget announcements, government approved a grant totaling \$1.8m for the renovation with the remainder of the funding from the FNU Capital Projects."

The project was carried out in two phases. The first phase was the construction of the reception area including two new x-ray rooms, sterilizing rooms, and a new store room. The second phase was the major work which involved the expansion of the main dental clinic to the tutor's room, lecture room, raising of the floor, installations of central cooling systems as well as the repair and extension off the compressor room in the basement area.

Professor Healey said the layout of the Pasifika 12 chair clinic was also redesigned into a new 28 dental chair clinic with the installation of the modern dental chairs, digital radiographs and dental equipment.

"New dental equipment comprising 40 new Adec 300 dental chairs with operator and assistant chairs, four dental X-ray machines, OPG machine, autoclaves, compressors, suction units, dental equipment and

teaching resources were also purchased to upgrade the existing teaching resources that have been in use for more than 20 years.”

Guest of Honour of the ceremony, Dr Tuisuva said this memorable occasion will allow the School of Dentistry and Oral Health to look back on its achievements and at the same time open a new clinic for its future endeavors and success.

“This Clinic recognises the years of dedication and struggles that we went through in establishing the School of Dentistry and Oral Health to what it is today. I dedicate the Tuisuva Dental Teaching Clinic to all the staff and students that went through with me during those years of struggle.

The 60-year-old, who hails from Balenabelo Village in the Province of Nadroga-Navosa is currently the Remote Services Manager, Oral Health Top End, Oral Health Services NT – Darwin Dental Clinic in the Department of Health.

Dr Tuisuva said with the rapid development of science and technology, the dental world was now facing complex problems that were not there before. He said global community and individual efforts are required to find new solutions.

“To cope with challenges, and to ensure changes help develop our society, our students have to understand these complex problems, they need to be highly knowledgeable to be able to work collaboratively and in teams,” Dr Tuisuva added.

The Clinic provides general dental services at minimal cost to members of the public through prior bookings.

The following programmes are offered through the School of Dentistry and Oral Health and currently there are 172 students enrolled in this School:

- Diploma in Dental Technology
- Bachelor of Dental Surgery
- Bachelor of Oral Health
- Postgraduate Diploma in Oral Surgery
- Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health (Dentistry)
- Master of Oral Surgery

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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).